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for love

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Blair to give up right to select peers

TONY BLAIR is to surrender his power to appoint members of the House of Lords in an attempt to head off Tory claims that he will pack the second chamber with "Tory's cronies".

The Prime Minister also plans to impose a limit on the number of peers representing each party. Although Labour may enjoy parity with the Conservatives after hereditary peers are abolished, it will not hand itself the huge majority in the Upper House now enjoyed by the Tories as a result of their 300 hereditary peers.

Mr Blair will give up the Prime Minister's historic right to select peers by accepting a recommendation to be made next month by the Neill committee on standards in public life. It will propose that people nominated for peerages should be vetted and approved by an independent watchdog.

The body could block nominees if it judged they had a shady business background or were too close to a political party after donating money to it. Downing Street is also considering a plan for peers to be nominated by an all-party committee on the make-up and powers of the new-look Lords.

One minister said yesterday: "As well as abolishing hereditary peers, we are determined to show we are serious about setting up a process to decide our long-term reforms."

The move reflects growing concern among ministers that Mr Blair is vulnerable to the charge of turning the Lords into a "Labour oligarchy" after the hereditary peers lose their

BY ANDREW GRICE
AND COLIN BROWN

rights in the first stage of his reforms.

Mr Blair has already provoked Tory claims he has rewarded several of "cronies" by appointing life peers who have given money to the Labour Party. They include Lord Sainsbury, former chairman of the supermarket chain, Lord Bragg the broadcaster, and Lord Puttnam, the film director.

Ministers have also been stung by Tory claims that Labour may never proceed with stage two of its Lords changes because of fears that it might prove harder to get its legislation through a party elected second chamber.

The Government has decided to introduce the Bill in the Commons, where it will win a huge majority, to reinforce the pressure on the Lords to bow to the views of the elected House.

Lord Strathclyde, the Opposition chief whip in the Lords, has warned that the Government would face "sustained resistance" if it tried to force through a Bill banning hereditaries.

A government source said last night: "There is no doubt the Tories are upping the ante. But we are ready for a battle and we will call their bluff. Do they really want to die in the ditch to preserve the rights of hereditary peers?"

At present, the Tories have a total of 474 peers, of whom 300 are hereditaries. Labour has 175, including 17 hereditaries. There are 325 crossbenchers (independents), 200 of whom are hereditaries, and 70 Liberal Democrats (24 hereditaries).

The move reflects growing concern among ministers that Mr Blair is vulnerable to the charge of turning the Lords into a "Labour oligarchy" after the hereditary peers lose their

PRESIDENTIAL CRISIS

Those e-mails: evidence that charts the affair between Bill and Monica

From: Lewinsky, Monica [mailto:Monica.Lewinsky@whitehouse.gov]
Subject: Re: [REDACTED]

In case you're still reading this... Yeah! Now I can start the email over again. I know you have to go back at it sometimes or... "Monica's gonna need it, I know what's coming".

1377-DC-0000107

To: CA Davis

From: CA Davis [mailto:CA.Davis@whitehouse.gov]
Subject: Re: [REDACTED]

I'm worried about you, Monica. Again, I think your idea to leave the area or get out of gov't work is a good one. I think you are at the risk of a corporative, psychologically, situation. I am at a loss as to make you feel better or worse if it is personally or otherwise. Well, I am not sure if you even believe some of the things that I am telling you. If not, then I am sorry, but I would be for you. Is your trip to L.A. for business or travel? Maybe, you will feel a little better.

June 17: Monica to her friend Catherine Davis: 'I did it with the nutrition guy.' Saw 'Big Creep' wearing a tie she had bought

To: CA Davis

From: CA Davis [mailto:CA.Davis@whitehouse.gov]
Subject: Re: [REDACTED]

Well, Catherine, my dear, [REDACTED] I hate being called "dear", the creep tells me that sometimes it's an old person's way of life. I don't have much to write - I am boring. But did I tell you I had sex with Thomas last week? I know, I am soooooo naughty. It was fun and good. I went over there with some ice cream and snuck right in. He made me feel like the reviews on my... cool or what???

August 14: Monica to Catherine: 'She had sex with Thomas last week. I know I am soooooo naughty.'

From: Lewinsky, Monica [mailto:Monica.Lewinsky@whitehouse.gov]
Subject: Re: [REDACTED]

It's over. I don't know what I will do now but I can't wait any longer and I can't go through all of this crap anymore. In some ways I hope I never hear from her again because he just left me out because he doesn't have the time to tell me the truth. I kind of phase in and out of being sad - so it is expected but it's survive. What other choice do I have?

September 4: Monica to Catherine: 'She realises it is all over. I can't go through all this crap. I hope I never hear from him again'

From: CA Davis [mailto:CA.Davis@whitehouse.gov]
Subject: Re: [REDACTED]

It's over. I hope he does not call you anymore. He does not have the balls to tell you straight how it is - kind of similar to the way he is as P.

September 5: Catherine to Monica: 'I hope he does not call you anymore. He does not have the balls to tell you straight how it is - kind of similar to the way he is as P.'

To: CA Davis [mailto:CA.Davis@whitehouse.gov]
Subject: Re: [REDACTED]

It's time for me to get out of here. I really hope that the creep and I can still have contact, because, I know it sounds unnecessary, but I can't get him out of my heart. I love him a lot. I know it's stupid. I hope to help him as bad right now I could cry.

November 6: Monica to Catherine: 'Job prospects are looking good. I can't get him out of my heart. I love him a lot'

IT IS THE most densely documented relationship in history - every gift, thought, word and deed spelled out in excruciating detail.

Monica Lewinsky's affair with the President - from the first stirrings of lust, through love, a sense of betrayal and the catastrophic end - is set out in black and white in the 3,000 pages of documentation that accompany the Starr report, in

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

testimony that was given to the investigators and in her own

London, Tokyo and Washington, high politics, and low gossip, in one apparently unstoppable narrative of her life.

Ms Lewinsky is, as the Starr report and President Clinton alike remarked, a compulsive teller; and the Internet and e-mail proved the perfect medium, just as they were the chosen carriers for the Starr report to be delivered instantaneously to the world.

All of these messages took place after the relationship ended, though sometimes she seems to believe that it will carry on.

The last "intimate contact" that she had with the President was in March 1997, but she continued to miss him; and she continued to be deeply enmeshed with the White House, searching for a job in the White House, and then elsewhere with the

help of the President's friend and close adviser, the fixer Vernon Jordan.

In June, she wrote to Ms Davis about another liaison, with whom she "did it" at a spa resort. "Yeah! Now I can start the count again," she says.

But her life is "not so great". She is desperately trying to get back into the White House, but every communication is meet-

ing with no luck. The "big creep" is wearing one of the many ties which she gave him, but it is scant consolation.

"I think I'm just going to have to walk away from it all," she confides.

Ms Davis is sympathetic, especially about her treatment at the hands of "Marsha" at the White House, who seems intent on stopping her return.

In September, she writes

again of her efforts to get back into the White House, to be close to Mr Clinton, and the ways that these efforts have been rebuffed.

By now, however, she is apparently aware that things will not get any further: "So it's over," she says. "In some ways I hope I'll never hear from him again."

In November, she meets Vernon Jordan to discuss jobs,

and she is deeply impressed with him, his sincerity and warmth, but also his seriousness about finding a job.

Unlike the others, he is both the President's friend and, it appears, hers. But her contacts with him, with Catherine Davis, with everybody have, by then, ceased to be just personal: they are crucial exhibits that will be used against her and the man she loved.

Lawyers seek punishment to fit a lapsed president

WITH THE airing of President Bill Clinton's videotaped testimony producing no new clamour for his removal, White House officials and lawyers were reported to be searching for an arrangement with the United States Congress that would satisfy the popular demand for punishment, yet allow him to serve out his term.

The office of the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, maintained, let it be known that his investigations into the Pres-

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

Ident were far from over and that additional damaging documents were to come.

The White House was said to be seriously considering a suggestion that Mr Clinton go in person to Capitol Hill to testify before the House judiciary committee - the committee that had first been made by Senator John Kerry, a Massachusetts Democrat, shortly before the videotape was aired. But it was alluded to repeatedly,

by both Democrats and Republicans, yesterday as the committee reconvened.

Among fervent Clinton supporters, however, there was a feeling that any appearance by the President before the judiciary committee should be agreed only as part of a deal that would end Mr Starr's investigation, and avert the threat of impeachment proceedings.

The former Senator and presidential candidate, Robert Dole, told a cable television

phone-in programme that he had heard the White House was planning some "bold move".

"Obviously the President's reaching out, he'd like to find some way to end this," Mr Dole said, but he doubted whether this, by itself, would resolve Mr Clinton's difficulties. He predicted that Congress will move ahead, "maybe some time next week or the following week and vote on whether to proceed with an impeachment inquiry".

That vote could come as

early as next week. According to Mr Dole, any "deal" would be most likely to be agreed between then and February, when a new Congress reconvenes after the mid-term elections.

The retiring Senator and constitutional historian, Daniel Pat Moynihan, has said Congress could dispatch the whole process - from the decision on an impeachment inquiry through to a vote in the Senate judiciary committee - within six weeks, but there are few who

believe this timetable to be feasible or likely.

The shift of attention from

the precariousness of the President's position to the possibility of a deal was one clear result of Mr Clinton's broadcast testimony and the flood of more details about his relationship with the former White House trainee, Monica Lewinsky.

Almost immediately the broadcast was over on Monday afternoon, a perceptible shift could be observed in the tenor of "insider" comment from the big political arenas to the small print of judicial process.

The criticism that had questioned Mr Clinton's credibility

and argued that he could not remain in office was replaced by debate about whether there was sufficient evidence to support charges of perjury and abuse of power, as set out by Mr Starr in his report, which also said that Mr Clinton lied under oath "three times" during the grand jury testimony.

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Mercedes-Benz A-Class

Charles I's shirt is really lady's nightie

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

display case on which are written the words: "Shirt Worn by King Charles I at His Execution Linen Shirt with Draw Threadwork Borders. 17th Century."

Below is a description: "This shirt traditionally held to be the second or over-shirt worn by King Charles I on the day of his execution (30 January 1649)."

Sir Thomas Herbert, Gentleman of the Bedchamber to the King in his last two years, wrote in his memoirs of the King's request: "Let me have a shirt on more than ordinary by reason the season is so sharp as probably may make mee shake, which some Observers will imagin' proceeds from fear I will have no such Imputation. I fear not death!"

Significantly, the shirt is not being included in an exhibition in the Queen's Gallery in Buckingham Palace next January to mark the 350th anniversary of the execution.

The exhibition will include paintings, prints and drawings of Charles.

One of the curators said that officially the shirt was not included because the exhibition was about portraits, but agreed that doubts about its provenance were also a problem.

Leading article, page 3



The disputed garment thought to be King Charles' shirt Nils Jorgensen/Rex

The shirt, acquired by Windsor Castle in 1911, is in a

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Education: A state school says that inspectors misjudged them, while the private sector claims record support

Council issues challenge to Ofsted report

A LOCAL authority is challenging publicly the verdict of school inspectors that an inner-city primary is failing.

In a highly unusual move, Professor Tim Brighouse, Birmingham's chief education officer, has issued a statement saying that inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) were wrong to fail Christ Church primary school just after it had achieved "phenomenal" national test results.

The school has appealed to Ofsted, alleging that the inspectors were "intimidating".

Just over a year ago, inspectors found that the school, where more than two-thirds have free school meals and a similar proportion speak English as a second language, had "significant weaknesses". After a second two-and-a-half-day visit by different inspectors this June, the 231-pupil school was told it was failing. Six weeks later, however, Brenda Hyde, the head, received this year's national test results.

They were, says Professor Brighouse, "phenomenal". In English, 59 per cent of children reached the expected level, compared with 28 per cent in the previous year. In mathematics the figure was 66 per cent compared with 31 per cent and in science 69 per cent compared with 14 per cent.

Professor Brighouse also sent in his own local education authority advisers whose view was the same as that of the first set of inspectors - the school had weaknesses, particularly in planning and marking pupils'

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor



Professor Tim Brighouse:
'Inspectors were wrong'

work, but it was definitely not failing.

Heads and local authorities have been reluctant to challenge Ofsted decisions but Professor Brighouse said: "The acid test of a school is would you send your own children there? - in this case, I would have no hesitation. There are occasions when you think Ofsted and HMI have got it a bit wrong - this is one of those occasions. Indeed, they have it more than a bit wrong."

Professor Brighouse's challenge comes after a future over the reappointment of Chris Woodhead, who leads Ofsted. Mr Woodhead and Professor Brighouse, who are joint vice-chairmen of the Government's Standards Task Force, have clashed before over Ofsted's report on the local authority.

Ms Hyde said: "I was told after the inspectors had been in the school for only a day that it was likely to fail. Last year, a team came in who said that most of the teaching was satisfactory or better. Now it is unsatisfactory. Does that mean another team can come in and find that it's completely different?"

Only two of the 10 teachers at the 231-pupil school had changed and one of the new teachers had just received a good Ofsted report at his previous school. The other Ms Hyde said, was not observed.

The school has been told that it cannot challenge the decision.

However, the Rev Simon Holloway, vice-chair of the governors, said: "The governors agreed to appeal over the way the inspection was carried out. It was intimidating and demoralising. If the same thing is happening in other schools we believe that if one school challenges the system this may stop the rot. The previous inspection was a positive experience."

A spokeswoman for Ofsted said that a reply to part of the school's letter had been sent and another letter would be sent about the rest. "Inspection is about more than just test results for a particular year," she added.

The inspectors' report showed that the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in only half the lessons. For the juniors, under one-third of lessons were satisfactory.

The only way the school could overturn the inspectors' judgement would be by going for a judicial review, she said.



Pupils answering questions in an English class at Christ Church primary school in Sparkbrook, Birmingham, which inspectors said was failing

Andrew Fox

More parents back independents

A RECORD number of parents would send their children to an independent school if they could afford it, according to a poll published yesterday.

Even among Labour voters, support is growing for fee-paying schools and backing for state subsidies to help children from low-income families attend them. Around 55 per cent of parents questioned in the Mori poll said they would prefer private education, up 4 per cent on last year. The poll of 1,886 adults commissioned by the in-

By JUDITH JUDD

dependent Schools Information Service (Isis) directed questions at parents and the general public. It revealed that 63 per cent of the public supported the use of government funds to educate children in independent schools, up from 59 per cent in 1997.

The Government has abolished the assisted-places scheme, which subsidised independent school places for bright pupils, and is using the

money to reduce class sizes. Last year, in a similar poll, 47 per cent thought standards in state schools were lower than in independent schools. This year, that has risen to 49 per cent.

Among Labour-voting parents, the proportion who would like to use private schools is 51 per cent - up from 47 per cent last year - compared with 40 per cent who would not. There are 2,400 independent schools in the UK and Ireland educating 500,000 children, about 7 per cent of the school population. Fees at

independent schools range from £600 for the youngest pupils to £4,600 for a term. Mori's survey also found that smaller classes, better life chances, more teacher support and better discipline were reasons why parents would choose independent schools.

David Woodhead, national Isis director, said: "These findings show that, in spite of Labour's abolition of the assisted-places scheme, most people continue to believe that independent schools' high standards should be available to children

regardless of their financial circumstances and the Government should support them."

A spokesman for the Local Government Association said that state school standards compared very favourably with independent schools. "Some of Britain's best brains... were educated at state schools."

John Dunford, general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, said polls of parents with children in state schools showed a high satisfaction rate.

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Joining the euro 'will force tax up'

A BIG hike in taxation will be needed by Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, as the price for Britain's entry into the single European currency to meet convergence on interest rates, it was claimed last night by senior Liberal Democrats.

The party yesterday proposed substantial tax increases targeted at middle class home owners and second pension holders. Stamp duty would be increased on house sales, and mortgage tax relief would be scrapped under the Liberal Democrat plans over the next five years. Compulsory second pension contributions would also be used to impose a tight economic squeeze on the middle classes.

The Liberal Democrat conference in Brighton endorsed plans to reduce the tax burden of the poorest 10 per cent of people by increasing taxes on the richest 10 per cent, an amendment backed by Simon Hughes. But raising taxes to pay for Britain to enter the euro could provide explosive ammunition for the Tories who will fight the next election on a commitment to keep the pound.

Treasury sources were furious at the claims that taxes would have to rise, which they strongly denied, insisting that Britain could reduce the level of interest by other means, before entry took place. "I don't

TAXATION

By COLIN BROWN
AND SARAH SCHAEFER



Bruce: Private talks

know whether they have a real understanding of economics. They clearly haven't. One of the reasons we haven't entered the euro is precisely because our economic cycle is not in line with interest rates of the 'ins', said a source close to the Chancellor.

The Liberal Democrats, who are committed to Britain's entry to the euro, said Bank of England officials had discussed in private talks this year they had been expecting a tax raising package, if the Government went ahead with entry to the euro.

"When we went to the Bank earlier this year, they said they had been expecting any government serious about joining the euro to do it," said a key adviser to the Liberal Democrat treasury spokesman, Malcolm Bruce.

The source said taxes will have to be raised to bring down interest rates by more than 50 per cent from 7.5 per cent to around 3.5 per cent to achieve convergence on rates in the euro among the 'ins', the countries who are joining the first wave.

Attacking tax breaks for the rich given by the Government, Mr Bruce said: "Preparing for

the single currency will require aligning British interests more closely with Europe, another reason why use of fiscal policy is essential. In a single currency area, there will be a single interest rate. This will make even more of a nonsense of his refusal to use taxes or savings to stabilise the economy."

The Liberal Democrat leadership was rebuffed when party members overwhelmingly backed calls for the National Minimum Wage to apply to all workers aged 16 and over. Delegates ignored a plea by the treasury team to give the Low Pay Commission powers to introduce a lower "development rate" if evidence suggested the full rate would damage job prospects for young people. Ed Davey, the party's economics

spokesman, warned that rigid rules for the labour market might result in a growth in youth unemployment. "We cannot ignore the practical real life effects. With the withering impact of unemployment on the young, we must be cautious."

But Lembit Opik, the party's spokesman on Wales, said that the exclusion of young people was against the party's principles. "Equal work should get equal pay... it is as simple as that. I accept there could be an impact on unemployment and we would have to be cautious. But that does not overcome the fundamental matter of principle and conviction that we are debating here."

Simon Eddy, 14, a member from Truro and St Austell, condemned the proposals as a "policy of poverty pay". He said to rapturous applause: "I don't eat less than the 18-year-old. When I am 16, will my food or heating cost less? Is there a discount card for 16-year-olds I can apply for? No one should be forced into work for money they can barely live on. The principle is simple: equal pay for equal work."

The leadership is braced for a conference defeat today over its plan to shift power over schools to parents from councillors, many of whom are Liberal Democrats.

Letters, Review, page 2



Baroness Nicholson, the former Tory MP who defected to the Liberal Democrats, has her eyes tested yesterday. Her party pledges to introduce free eye checks

Loyalty fee plea for NHS doctors

HEALTH

By COLIN BROWN
AND SARAH SCHAEFER

A PROPOSAL to give NHS consultants higher pay to stop them "moonlighting" and taking on private patients was given enthusiastic support by Liberal Democrats yesterday at a fringe meeting with the BMA.

They backed a plan, being considered by health ministers, to reward consultants who work exclusively for the NHS with an extra £30,000 a year, possibly by taking the money from their controversial system of merit money. Newly appointed consultants earn between £25,000 to £28,000 with merit awards taking their salaries to between £27,000 and £29,000, and occasionally as high as £32,000.

Joe Welsh, a West Sussex GP, was loudly applauded when he called for consultants to be given higher pay for greater commitment to the NHS.

The Liberal Democrat conference approved setting up a standing conference to review rationing decisions; they would also abolish charges for dental check-ups and freeze prescription charges. Simon Hughes, the party's health spokesman, said there should be a maximum waiting time of six months for serious operations.

Sc. tea

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Boy with the cheek of a young Hague

THE SKETCH



MICHAEL BROWN

Delegates gasped as Mr Bruce was introduced as "the most unpopular member of our party..." and even the man in question appeared momentarily thrown. I had always thought of him as a decent friendly chap, and although I had been warned that the conference has a healthy disrespect for its big cheeses, this appeared to be going a bit far. Fortunately the chairman completed the sentence "...as far as the Labour Party is concerned and unlikely to his credit".

A relieved Mr Bruce smiled and quickly got into his stride, throwing large handfuls of Labour-bashing into his speech. Delegates gorged on this, reminding their leader, Paddy Ashdown, that too much cosying up to Labour is not to their taste.

Simon brought the conference to life as the shadow of rival coverage from the Clinton videos was lifted. A day of enthusiastic debates on candidate selection and the economy provided opportunities for lively performances from such as Malcolm Bruce, the party's Treasury spokesman and yes, even from the outgoing party president, Robert Maclellan, during his valedictory address.

Mr Maclellan, meanwhile, must have been taking lessons in public speaking

from young Simon. Not normally given to conference oratory he took us by surprise with an elegant speech which brought his four-year presidency to an end. A self-deprecating line at the beginning of the speech won the delegates over to his side.

As he got into his stride, he even felt confident enough to throw in one or two timid jokes. But Liberal Democrats owe him a great debt of gratitude because of the negotiations which led to the terms of reference by which the Jenkins Commission on proportional representation must abide. If they achieve their dream of electoral reform, Mr Maclellan will go down in history as one of the principal architects.

There was a slight tremble in his voice as he came to his peroration. He spoke grandly of Liberal Democracy being "the creed of the new millennium... creeping up the estuaries of the world and filling the stagnant pools with certainty of an incoming cleansing tide".

In any other circumstances such flowery language would have been dismissed as classic Liberal Democratic pomposity, but Mr Maclellan was entitled to his moment of glory and the conference loved it.

He sat down, overcome, to rapturous applause and a standing ovation. Even I wanted to ovate - the Conservative conference instinct not yet out of my system.

In years to come, when Simon attends his first Liberal Democrat conference as the newly victorious prime minister, Mr Maclellan will be wheeled on to be hailed by the faithful for making the dream come true.

CONFERENCE BRIEFS

'Blair behaves like Thatcher'

THE PRESIDENTIAL style of the Blair Government was "little different from the Thatcherite model" said Robert Maclellan, outgoing party president. He warned of a failure of comprehension if Mr Blair cut short constitutional reform. He added: "For all the bustle, the New Deals, the task forces, the special action zones, the break truth about this government is coming through. There is no renewal of Britain in prospect."

The new president, Baroness Maddock, gives her inauguration speech today.

Williams out of London race

BARONESS WILLIAMS ruled herself out of the race to be mayor for London. She was "100 per cent sure" she would not run for the post of Britain's first directly elected mayor, leaving Simon Hughes, party health spokesman, favourite to win the candidacy. The Liberal Democrats will use a one member, one vote ballot to choose their candidates for the mayoralty and the 25-seat Greater London Authority. For the mayoralty, a shortlist of five candidates will be drawn up. The elections are due to be held early in 2000.

Today's business

- Emergency debate on counter-terrorism measures.
- Debate on international investment.
- Don Foster replies to a debate on education. From 2pm.
- Debate on marketing of breast milk substitutes.
- Menzies Campbell and Baroness Williams speak in a debate on foreign affairs.
- Matthew Taylor opens a debate on environment and transport.
- Fringe meetings include:
- Business Services Association - The Economics of Fair Employment.
- National Housing Federation - Just the Job.

Labour document urges members to 'smear' Lib Dems

LABOUR ACTIVISTS facing pressure from the Liberal Democrats should "find one flaw and smear them all" according to a leaked party document.

The paper, written by a researcher in Lambeth, was meant to show how New Labour can win back council seats lost because of the "loony left" in the 1980s. Lambeth's Labour group, which took back control of the council in May, has been praised by Tony Blair as "more New Labour than New Labour".

Now the council's ruling group is spreading its message more widely. Its leader, Jim Dickson, will address a fringe meeting at next week's Labour conference under the document's title, "Lessons from Lambeth".

The paper was leaked to a left-wing magazine, Red Pepper, after being sent to Labour councillors and ward secretaries in Hackney by Luke Akehurst, a former aide to Frank Dobson and Glenda Jackson Mr Akehurst, who now works for Hackney Labour group, was a member of the Blairite Labour Co-ordinating Committee.

The committee helped to draft far-reaching changes designed to reduce the power of left-wingers in the party. Other members included Neal Lawson and Ben Lucas, former aides to Jack Straw and Gordon Brown, who later formed a lobbying company, LLM.

The four-page document recommends dirty tactics such as offering pacts with the Liberal Democrats in order to attack them when they refuse to work with the Tories "because they tend to hate the Liberal Democrats as much as you do"; and showing the opposition in a negative light.

BY FRAN ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

Labour supporters should suggest working with the Liberal Democrats, the paper says. "Call for a pact around your new agenda and then slam them for opposing it."

"The Liberal Democrats will never do a deal with Labour so you can offer them one in complete safety."

Red Pepper's editor, Hilary Wainwright, said the briefing document showed a contrast between the rhetoric and the reality of New Labour's attitude to the Liberal Democrats.

"These people aren't just local mavericks. They are people who are part of the Millbank set. This will reinforce the fear of a lot of the more radical Liberal Democrats that New Labour is more concerned to destroy them than to have a partnership."

Mr Dickson said the section of the paper dealing with smear tactics had gone "over the top" and the message he hoped to put across was a positive one.

Labour won back a 19-seat majority in Lambeth this year after four years in which the Liberal Democrats were the biggest party.

The council has been beset by revelations of incompetence and fraud. "This briefing was prepared in the context of extremely hard-fought battles in inner London between Labour and the Liberal Democrats. We would never seek to spread false allegations," he said.

Mike Tuffrey, leader of Lambeth Liberal Democrats for eight years until last month, said he believed the document reflected the Labour campaign.

"These sort of dirty tricks were evident in their campaign," he said. "Instead of trying to work constructively with us they went behind our backs, did secret deals with the Tories and played politics with the issues."

Dixons offers 'free' Internet use

DIXONS, the high street retailer, yesterday announced a new Internet access service that is ostensibly free - but will cost more than premium-rate sex lines to any users who need technical support.

The new service, called Freeserve, also drew complaints from rivals who charge an average of £12 per month to provide access. They claimed it could lead to the proliferation of pornography and electronic junk mail sent over the Net. But it could also trigger a

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

"commodification" of Internet access, making it akin to the market for instant coffee - where almost indistinguishable brands compete for primacy while offering a service to which the user adds a simple ingredient. For coffee, it is hot water; for the Internet, a PC.

Freeserve will be available via free CD-ROMs distributed through the Dixons chain of more than 1,000 stores, which

also include Currys, PC World and The Link. The company says its primary target is home and small business users, a market for which it already provides 60 per cent of PCs.

John Clare, Dixons' chief executive, said: "Freeserve users will not pay a penny for their Internet access other than the call they make."

He described the service as "a foothold in the online market" for Dixons, adding: "By removing the monthly subscription charges we believe that

Freeserve will revolutionise the Internet service market and drive up Internet use."

The software will initially be available only for PCs and uses Microsoft programming. Telephone support will cost £1 per minute, far more than other Internet service providers.

Dixons said there would be income in time, from electronic commerce, advertising and sponsorship of the Freeserve Web site, and telephone revenues from its partner Energis.



Nicole Kidman and Iain Glen performing in 'The Blue Room' which opened at the Donmar Warehouse, in London, last night. The play is adapted by David Hare from Arthur Schnitzler's 'La Ronde'

Meat firms 'flouted rules on BSE'

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

OFFALS WITH a high risk of carrying BSE could have passed into human food as recently as 1995 because slaughterhouses routinely ignored government regulations, according to a former senior government vet.

Andrew Fleetwood concluded that there was "widespread and flagrant infringement" by abattoirs of rules intended to prevent the use in food of "Specified Bovine Offals" (SBOs). The SBOs are cattle parts, such as the spine and various internal organs, that are most likely to carry the BSE prions that have been shown to lead to the fatal "new variant" Creutzfeld-Jakob Disease (vCJD).

New laws banning the use of SBOs for food came into force in November 1989, three years after the first official recognition of BSE. But in written evidence to the BSE Inquiry, where he is testifying today, Dr Fleetwood said he had seen a letter from a consultant to the meat industry in June 1995, which said that "unscrupulous abattoirs had cheated and would continue to cheat the SBO legislation and that SBO was little better than a joke in certain quarters of the industry". SBOs were meant to be removed from carcasses and stained blue to prevent them being used in food. But he became suspicious in July 1994 when he compared actual and expected amounts of SBO recorded by rendering companies. The difference implied that SBOs were being put unstained into food. Scientific analysis has shown that thousands of BSE-infected cows would have been slaughtered after 1989, and used for food.

Dr Fleetwood also said government veterinary inspectors failed to clamp down on the problem.

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The writing's on the wall for offensive advertising posters

**WHAT WAS WORSE?
THIS ADVERT
OR YOUR
FAILURE TO COMPLAIN?**

The CRE advertising campaign included questioning the public's reaction to its racist posters

IT WAS never going to work. When the Commission for Racial Equality launched a range of poster advertisements depicting black people as rapists and comparing them to orang-utans, the campaign was bound to misfire.

Instead of achieving its aim of shaking up Britain and making us realise how racist we are, the posters have brought stinging criticisms of the CRE itself and the fastest wave of complaints the Advertising Standards Authority can remember.

The police are now wondering whether the adverts actually break the law, and if they should bring a prosecution.

Adverts which backfire are nothing new. In fact, firms that rent out poster sites have come up with a sanction against the perpetrators of unnecessarily offensive campaigns – and the CRE is likely to be the first organisation to suffer the consequences.

Dismissed by the run of commercials for jeans, cars and clothes that have sent complainers reaching for their phones, the industry this summer started a vetting system. The CRE and other known offenders may be required to have any future poster campaigns vetted by the ASA before they are allowed on the billboards.

The process could also mark an end to adverts which companies cynically devise to cause a stir with a quick, offensive hit.

"The poster people don't want their posters hijacked by companies which court controversy for controversy's sake," says an ASA spokesman.

Other offenders which might not have passed the vetting

JANE ROBINS
Media Correspondent

stage include the French Connection FCUK adverts and the Lee Jeans poster showing a very sharp, very high stiletto being aimed at a man's bottom.

"Being offensive and backfiring are the same thing in advertising," said Tom Rodwell of advertising agency Court Burnett. "The CRE campaign was both stupid and offensive. When amateurs like this get into the business, it hurts everybody."

The ASA agrees there have been fewer companies which think causing offence will pay off. Benetton has toned down its campaigns, although some others, like French Connection, have seen profits increase – its chairman, David Bernstein, said the FCUK campaign helped annual profits jump 32 per cent to £32m this year.

But there are non-offensive campaigns too, which cause problems. "This summer Melinda Messenger was appearing live at the big billboard on the Commercial Road [London]," says Mark Robinson of J Walter Thompson agency. "The problem was she was showering, and was in danger of becoming a major traffic hazard."

Tom Rodwell agrees. "Some ads misfire in an entirely innocent way. There's the famous old example of the Strand cigarettes TV ad, which showed a man in a foggy London street, with sultry music, and the slogan 'you're never alone with a Strand'. The hitch was that nobody bought the cigarettes because they didn't want to be a sad, lonely bastard like the man in the ad."



superior denim

DIESEL JEANS

In July, the ASA told Diesel Jeans to stop using a poster featuring four young women dressed as nuns with their jeans and holding rosaries under the headline "Superior Denim". In some posters a picture of the Virgin Mary in jeans was shown, triggering 95 complaints from people who found the images deeply offensive. Whether they would otherwise have been customers for Diesel jeans is not known.



LEE JEANS

A poster showing a man's bottom lying vulnerably under a woman's stiletto was launched at the height of girl-power this spring, but apparently made some chaps feel "belittled and humiliated". Eighty-nine people complained, but the ASA didn't ban it. However, alienating men was considered a bad idea. "Women feel they have been victimised for years and take offence readily. Who knows? In 20 years more men may feel that way," a spokesman said at the time.



CLUB 18-30

Launched a range of magazine ads and posters, devised by Saatchi and Saatchi, which the men loved, but the girls didn't – and it was rumoured they were put off going on the legendary raunchy holidays as a result.

The slogans may give a clue to the problem: "Beaver Espana", "The Summer of 69", "Discover your erogenous zone", and "Girls, can we interest you in a package holiday?" Banned by the ASA.

fcuk advert



FCUK

French Connection caused a stir with its FCUK campaign. "It caused problems for parents trying to explain to their children what it was about," said the ASA, which seemed confused by how to react to the campaign. It was deemed offensive, but all right when commas were used – as in f.c.u. and k. It also sanctioned "French Connection Me". Profits went up, but the advertisements backfired among those who thought them plain silly.

Secret local party donors banned

BY FRAN ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

SECRET POLITICAL donations channelled through local parties will be banned under new rules drawn up by Lord Neill's party funding enquiry, *The Independent* has learnt.

The revelation follows allegations that one of Britain's most powerful crime families gave £2,000 to Labour, possibly to the Islington constituency, before the last election.

The Neill committee on standards in public life, which will publish its report next month, will recommend limits above which donations must be declared, and which are almost certain to be legally enforced by the Government. They may well be lower than the £5,000 limit already set by the parties.

Although all three parties have promised to disclose national donations over £5,000, local payments do not have to be disclosed.

Labour, which has published national figures for two years, told the committee the loophole should be closed. It provides a means by which donors who do not want to be named can keep their identities secret.

A spokesman for the Neill committee said it did not intend to see if recommendations "blown out of water" by letting the loophole continue.

Labour says the sums given to the national party by constituents are "negligible" but cannot give an exact amount. The figure is included with "membership donations" of £515,000 in its 1997 report.

The Tories received £750,000 in donations from constituency parties last year, but do not name donors to local branches.

Labour has moved to rebut allegations that Tommy Adams, a London gangster jailed last week, gave money to the party. It said no such donation had been made nationally, but it could not rule out a local payment because officials had been unable to contact former treasurers.

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Schools urged to teach citizenship

By JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

LESSONS IN citizenship should be compulsory for pupils as young as five to help safeguard democracy, a government-commissioned report said yesterday.

The report, drawn up by Professor Bernard Crick, lays down what pupils should learn about morality, how to join in public life and how to help their communities.

Even infant pupils should be able to take part in a simple debate and vote on an issue and juniors should discuss "a range of moral dilemmas" and understand the meaning of freedom of speech.

Secondary school pupils should learn about the changing constitution and "the values, interests and policies of the main political parties".

David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, warmly welcomed the report, drawn up by his former tutor at Sheffield University.

He declared himself to be a "conservative with a small 'c'" in these matters. "Children in primary schools need to be taught right from wrong. We have to be clear about that."

He added: "Education for citizenship is vital to revive and

LITTLE VOTERS' LIST

- Pupils aged five to seven should: be able to justify a personal opinion; take part in a simple debate and vote; recognise how the concept of fairness can be applied in a reasoned and reflective way, and understand terms such as respect, disrespect, question, comment, compare and contrast.
- Pupils aged seven to 11 should: be able to reflect and hypothesise on issues of social, moral and political concern; take part in a question and answer session with an expert; understand there can be different types of government, and understand terms such as majority election, MP and Member of the European Parliament.
- Pupils aged 11 to 14 should: express plausibly and reflect on viewpoints contrary to their own; demonstrate an understanding of the use of statistics; know about the work of Parliament, the Government and the Executive in making and changing the law, and understand the economic system: the market, the concept of price, poverty and unemployment.
- Pupils aged 14 to 16 should: investigate, analyse, discuss and reflect on major challenges faced by communities; take part in formal debates and have structured opportunities to vote, and know about the values, interests and policies of the main political parties.

tive subjects using "balance and fairness".

"It is an insult to the professionalism of teachers to think that these areas cannot be dealt with in the same way that controversial areas of history would be dealt with or aspects of the environment in geography lessons."

The report's recommendations, including "learning outcomes", will now go to advisers drawing up the new national curriculum for 2000. About a third of schools are at present teaching citizenship.

Mr Blunkett said the Government was not telling schools what to teach but setting out learning objectives. Teachers would decide how to meet them.

Teachers' leaders warned that the curriculum was already too full.

John Dunford, general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, said: "We really don't need a commitment to another 5 per cent of curriculum time in secondary schools. I am afraid that a lot of good work being done in health education, careers, sex education and personal and social education will be squeezed out."

An independent commission was unnecessary, he said, and smacked of "Big Brother".

Leading article, page 3

sustain an active democratic society in the new century. Linking rights and responsibilities and emphasising socially acceptable behaviour to others, underpins the development of active citizenship."

Citizenship will take up no more than 5 per cent of curriculum time. In primary schools it will be part of other lessons but there may be separate citizenship lessons in secondary schools. Because

the requirement to teach citizenship will be new to English schools, an independent commission on citizenship education will be set up "to guard against any suggestion of political bias".

Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education will check that schools are fulfilling their legal duty.

Professor Crick said that schools were already used to teaching children about sensi-

JADED COMMUTERS can give themselves a lift on the way home by popping into their railway station medical centre for a supply of Viagra.

Medicentre, the chain of private medical clinics located on London rail stations and in shopping malls in the North and Midlands, is offering a bulk-buy deal on the drug to capitalise on the temporary NHS ban announced last week by Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health.

The clinics are charging £120 for a one-hour consulta-

tion and blood test under their new impotence service, but the fee is refundable if patients buy 76 tablets at £15 each, making a total of £1,170.

A spokeswoman for Medicentre said: "You can get it in Boots for less but you have to have a private prescription from a doctor first and that can cost up to £50. Patients will only

be prescribed Viagra if it is appropriate after they have had the full consultation."

If the drug is made available on the NHS, one in four GPs would be opposed to it, according to a survey by BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

The survey of 100 doctors

found even among those who said it should be prescribed on

the NHS, three-quarters thought it should be rationed or restricted in some way.

VIAGRA CORNER

DISPATCHES FROM THE FRONTIERS OF MEDICINE



Native squirrel faces total eclipse

By MICHAEL McCARTHY
Environment Correspondent

THE RED squirrel faces extinction in England in the next decade and spiralling decline elsewhere in the UK unless further measures are taken to protect it, a report from The Wildlife Trusts warns today.

The continuing success of its woodland rival, the introduced grey squirrel, is driving the native red from more and more of its remaining habitats in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, the report says.

Apart from populations on the Isle of Wight and on Brownsea Island in Dorset, and a few individuals in Thetford Forest, Norfolk, the native red has virtually gone from England south of Lancashire.

Although there are still good numbers in Northumberland, Durham and Cumbria, these too are at risk. Northumberland was invaded by greys five years ago, and the report's assessment is that the estimated 30,000 red squirrels remaining could be lost from mainland England by 2010.

The red squirrel, *Sciurus vulgaris*, is no ecological match for its North American cousin the grey, *Sciurus carolinensis*. However, the report debunks the common belief that greys attack reds and drive them away. They simply eat them out of house and home. Greys also carry a virus called parapox to which they are resistant but which the reds find fatal.

Grey squirrels were first introduced to Woburn Abbey in Bedfordshire in 1867. They have increased to more than 2.5 million. Their colonisation continues at the rate of about six miles a year.

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Report attacks child jail regime

CONDITIONS AT A CHILD JAIL are so bad that if it was run by a social services department it would probably be closed down, the Chief Inspector of Prisons says in a scathing report published today.

Sir David Ramsbotham says that conditions at Werrington young offenders institution in Staffordshire were "utterly unsatisfactory" for 15 to 17-year-olds.

He savagely criticises Prison Service managers who introduced a series of recent changes at Werrington, all of which had been detrimental.

Sir David says: "To find that adult prison conditions have been deliberately introduced, overturning previous and appropriate treatment and conditions for children, is nothing short of disgraceful..."

"I have not come across such totally deliberate and unnecessary impoverishment of children anywhere and suspect that, were Werrington to be a secure custody unit in the hands of the social services, it would be closed for lack of provision of appropriate facilities."

Sir David makes it plain that his criticism is levelled not at the "obviously caring" governor or staff but at senior Prison Service managers who directed the changes in the regime.

Dormitory accommodation was replaced by adult prison-style two-person cells as the number of inmates was doubled to 192. Sir David says young people should not be held in units of more than 60.

Inmates - Sir David called them "children" - had been switched from eating in communal dining rooms, to collecting food from a servery and eating it in their cells, which were "essentially lavatories".

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

There was inadequate medical cover to look after teenagers who threatened to injure themselves and the sports hall had no showers or lavatories.

Association time was limited to two evenings a week on landings with no chairs - so inmates simply stood around outside their cells.

The number of inmates who deliberately hurt themselves was alarmingly high and the effect of the regime was to introduce young people to imprisonment, rather than offer an alternative to a life of crime.

The Howard League for Penal Reform said the report was "extremely damning".

Spokeswoman Fran Russell said: "There perhaps needs to be an investigation into what happened here. They had some money to make some changes and what they did was to create something much worse than was there before."

Paul Cavafino, of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, said: "The overcrowded conditions which the Chief Inspector found at Werrington were a result of the courts' increasing punitiveness towards young offenders."

"This has produced a 64 per cent increase in the number of juveniles jailed since 1992. The latest figures show that 88 per cent of these young people are reconvicted within two years of release."

Richard Tilt, director-general of the Prison Service, said he had commissioned an "urgent report" into conditions at Werrington and admitted that there was need for "substantial improvement".

English Heritage says the Stonehenge Master Plan will further enhance the appeal of "the most powerful, mysterious and distinctive place in the world".

Brian Harris

Stonehenge becomes a walk-in, car-free zone

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

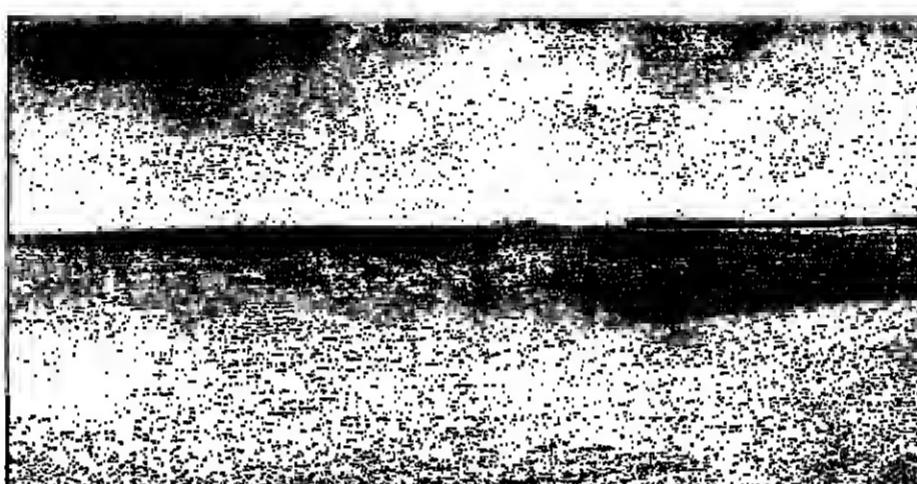
AFTER YEARS of debate and sometimes heated arguments, the final plans to remove traffic from around Stonehenge were unveiled yesterday.

Sir Jocelyn Stevens, the chairman of English Heritage, said the plans would restore the "dignity and sense of isolation" of the site.

The scheme for the 5,000-year-old monument in Wiltshire includes burying the busy A303 under a cut-and-cover tunnel and a bypass for nearby Winterbourne Stoke. It is expected to cost around £125m.

English Heritage said it would cause minimal disruption to local people and provide free access for the public to walk "amongst the stones and to experience the most powerful, mysterious and distinctive place in our world".

The scheme was given Gov-



How the prehistoric site would look without the road

ernment backing last July when details of the roads programme were announced.

A spokeswoman for English Heritage said: "The reunification of Stonehenge which re-

stores its dignity and its sense of isolation set amongst 450 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in an ancient landscape of chalk downland is the ultimate and most important environmental objective of the Stonehenge Master Plan."

She added the closure of the A344, the removal of the 1960s visitors' centre, which has been described as a na-

tional disgrace, and the restoration of the landscape could start straight away.

The new environment is expected to attract new varieties of flowers, ground nesting birds and butterflies.

Farmers affected by the plan will be compensated by English Heritage and the National Trust over the next 20 years.

Although no-one knows for sure how Stonehenge was created, the latest theory is that the large outer stones, which came from the Marlborough Downs, about 20 miles away, were dragged on sledges over rollers.

It is thought that it would take 600 men to move each stone over the steepest part of the route.

The inner circle, which was built around 2000 BC, is made from bluestones from the Preseli Mountains in south-west Wales, about 240 miles away.

Secret of how to relax and be happy

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

"ASK YOURSELF whether you are happy," said the 19th century philosopher JS Mill, "and you cease to be so." But now psychologists have found what they say is the key to happiness.

Professor Michael Argyle told the British Psychological Society social psychology conference that his research had shown that people who enjoyed dancing achieved the highest levels of happiness.

In a sample of 270 adults, researchers looked at the positive emotions induced by four different leisure pursuits - sport/exercise, music, church-going and watching television soap operas as well as family activities and work.

"Leisure is very important for people's happiness as it is something they have control over," said Professor Argyle. "Other things we associate with happiness such as marriage or income or the weather we can't change."

The results found exercise, and particularly dancing, scored highest on the scale of happiness - defined by Professor Argyle as "experiencing frequent positive states" as well as general satisfaction with life.

"Watching soaps was positive but very feebly so," said Professor Argyle. "In comparison, sport was totally different and much more attractive. Dancing was particularly so because it not only combines exercise but also sociability and music. And sociability is also one of the biggest factors for happiness as was music. At the bottom of the scale was watching television which was very low key because people were barely awake."

His research also found wide differences in the levels of happiness reported by people of different nationalities. More than 50 per cent of Danes say they are satisfied with their life, compared with 10 per cent of French and Italian people, and about 30 per cent of Britons.

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JPM 10/10/98

German election: Rivals head for a photo-finish – but millions of workers won't have a say in the final outcome



Bernd Scholzen, a satirist, depicts Chancellor Helmut Kohl and his wife, Hannelore, as a married pensioner couple eating spaghetti by painting their heads onto a copy of the original painting 'Sharing their pleasures' by late Italian artist E Zampighi. Mr Scholzen plans to offer the work to the parliament in Berlin

Germany's 'guests' fight for the vote

ALGIN ARTAR has a portrait of Kemal Ataturk hanging in the office of his bread factory in Leverkusen, but the coffee he serves visitors is instant, and his preferred language German. "I feel more German than Turkish," he says. "I don't see why I can't have the same rights as a German."

Mr Artar, 31, who has lived in Germany for 20 years, is one of more than seven million people living in the country as temporary residents. Known as "guests", they are often warned by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, in his election campaign speeches, to behave themselves, or face deportation.

Despite paying German taxes and employing 50 people, Mr Artar does not have the vote. In the eyes of the law he is a "foreigner", as is his Turkish wife, born in Germany, and their two children.

Since 1913, German citizenship has been legally defined as a genetic attribute. The descendants of Germans settled in Russia in the 18th century are Germans, and can "return" to Germany. Grandchildren of "guest-workers" who arrived in the Sixties are still "guests".

Most political parties now agree such disenfranchisement of nearly 10 per cent of Germany's population is untenable. The Social Democrats, Greens and even Chancellor Kohl's junior coalition partners, the Free Democrats, want reform. Mr Kohl's Christian Democrats are split on the issue. Only their Bavarian sister party, the right-wing Christian Social Union, are holding out against change.

"This cannot go on," says Cem Ozdemir, a Green MP. "The nationalisation process is too slow. We must urgently establish the right to citizenship, and even automatic right. Children born here, for instance, must be given German nationality at birth."

Mr Ozdemir was born 33

years ago in Germany to Turkish parents. When he applied for German citizenship, he had to show evidence that he had renounced his Turkish nationality. German law does not recognise dual citizenship.

His party and Gerhard Schröder's Social Democrats have both pledged to legalise dual nationality, and to give "foreign" children born in Germany automatic German citizenship.

Conservative politicians fear the prospect. "At one stroke we would have three million new citizens with double passports, which would lead to a shift in the balance of power," says Peter Gauweiler, a prominent Bavarian right-winger. The shift he refers to is towards the left. Most of the immigrants are working class, national Social Democrat supporters, and would be likely to vote for the parties that give them the passport and the vote.

A German passport would open many doors. Training courses run by the police, state institutions and banks insist on German citizenship. Teaching, the civil service, and many professions exclude foreigners. Until April this year, chimney-sweeps had to be by law Germans. Now a European Union passport will suffice.

At the same time, politicians bemoan the prospect of German citizenship might half the radicalisation of Turkish youth who are increasingly drawn to Islamic fundamentalism. Shut off from the local community, many find solace in the mosques, some of which are controlled by radical preachers driven out of Turkey.

A new nationality law is expected to be tabled early in the new parliament if Mr Schröder wins the general election on Sunday. A majority in favour of reform existed in the outgoing parliament, but it was torpedoed by Chancellor Kohl's Bavarian allies.

Late surge gives Kohl hope

THE GERMAN election race is moving towards a photo-finish, with Chancellor Helmut Kohl making a late surge to win an unprecedented fifth term, while his challenger, Gerhard Schröder runs into controversy.

Mr Schröder's allies in the trade unions and on the left wing of his Social Democrat Party united yesterday in condemning disparaging remarks made by his shadow economics minister about the welfare state.

Mr Stollmann described Germany's much vaunted social welfare system as "a prison for the average earner".

By calling for cuts in benefits and the introduction of pri-

BY IMRE KARACS
in Bonn

vate pensions, Mr Stollmann, a millionaire computer entrepreneur, provoked outrage among traditional SPD voters.

Mr Stollmann is part of a double act, the subtlety of which has been lost on many voters. While Mr Schröder swung to the left in the election campaign to reassure the grassroots, it fell to Mr Stollmann to seek votes in the so-called "New Centre" of German politics. His role was to keep business sweet. The problem is that many undecided voters are now so confused about what Mr Schröder wants,

that they are returning to Chancellor Kohl's side in droves.

As a result, the 10-point lead Mr Schröder enjoyed over his rival has shrunk to two points in just a matter of weeks. All pollsters agree that the gap is now too close to call.

Mr Kohl's campaign has gathered further momentum with his wife's claim that US President Bill Clinton, Tony Blair and Russian President Boris Yeltsin want the Chancellor to win.

Hannelore Kohl said: "They all say, 'Helmut, we've got our fingers crossed. You do it.'

Chancellor Kohl's late charge in the polls has in-

creased the incentive for Social Democrat Party leaders to distance themselves from Mr Stollmann's outburst. "We knew we had differing opinions in some areas," said the SPD campaign manager, Franz Mimiteler. "Voters know he's not a Social Democrat, that he doesn't speak for the SPD and isn't campaigning in the traditional way."

But though it is true he is not speaking for the party, Mr Stollmann appears to say many things his mentor, Mr Schröder, dare not utter on the campaign trail. As the unrepentant businessman maintained yesterday, "My ideas enrich the party. If I was only here to defend SPD

policy, Gerhard Schröder

plastic message, and is in danger of becoming a national laughing stock. Pollsters say German voters punish a party that diverges from its image, and Mr Stollmann clearly has trouble sounding like a Social Democrat. As Guido Westerwelle, the leader of the Free Democrats said: "Mr Stollmann is about as suited to the SPD as a penguin is to the Sahara."

Chancellor Kohl, meanwhile, keeps to the party script. Apart from an attempt to tap German fears over the Russian crisis, he has not deviated from his main soundbite: "Stability is strength."

Worse, the SPD has lost the coherence of its admittedly sim-

ilaristic message, and is in danger of becoming a national laughing stock. Pollsters say German voters punish a party that diverges from its image, and Mr Stollmann clearly has trouble sounding like a Social Democrat. As Guido Westerwelle, the leader of the Free Democrats said: "Mr Stollmann is about as suited to the SPD as a penguin is to the Sahara."

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FBI chiefs thought that Marx was a Communist

BY ANDREW GUMBEL
in Los Angeles

IT MUST have been the name that gave him away. Or maybe it was the gleeful anarchy with which he peppered his every remark. Either way, it now emerges that the Federal Bureau of Investigation took an unusually close interest in Groucho Marx and seriously suspected, during the paranoid Cold War days of the 1950s and 1960s, that the madcap comic was a member of the Communist Party.

In 1953, when McCarthyism was at its height and artists and entertainers were being blacklisted in Hollywood, the bureau wrote a 17-page report to J Edgar Hoover attempting to establish whether or not the other famous Marx was a Communist too. Over the next decade, the FBI monitored his hit television show *You Bet Your Life* for signs of subversion.

Even the public joined in the hunt. "I suggest that the TV entertainer Groucho Marx [sic] be investigated as being a Communist," one viewer wrote to the bureau in 1960. "Last night on his program both my husband and I understood him to pronounce 'The United States as 'The United Snakes.' Clearly



Groucho Marx: 'Whatever it is, I'm against it'

ly, the viewer was unfamiliar with Groucho's line that "whatever it is, I'm against it".

In all, the FBI built a file of more than 200 pages on Groucho, who died in 1977 at the age of 82. In response to a request

under the Freedom of Information Act by the California history professor Jon Wiener, the agency has released 186 pages. A further 16 pages have been withheld "in the interest of national defense or foreign policy".

The file is full of the kind of unbridled animacy that Groucho might have used as comic material, like the time the FBI analysed a show in which a guest spoke Russian to Groucho.

What really appears to have got the FBI's goat, though, is Groucho's affiliation to the Committee for the First Amendment, a group of actors, writers and directors who opposed the House Un-American Activities Committee's investigations in Hollywood.

By 1953, the bandleader on Groucho's television show, Jerry Fielding, was under investigation and was eventually fired under government pressure. "I think they wanted me to name Groucho," Fielding told Groucho's biographer Hector Arce many years later.

The file is full of the kind of unbridled animacy that Groucho might have used as comic material, like the time the FBI analysed a show in which a guest spoke Russian to Groucho.

Spanish MPs reject abortion

BY ELIZABETH NASH
in Madrid

SPANISH MPS yesterday rejected by just one vote a proposal to reform the country's abortion law after a debate that had aroused a fierce polemic in public opinion, with the Church whipping up a shrill campaign of opposition.

By 172 votes to 173, the Cortes (Spanish parliament) rejected a Socialist proposal to permit an abortion if the woman were under severe social or psychological pressure.

It leaves Spain with a law passed in 1985 by a timid Socialist government that is

vote, and at least half of those were known to be against.

The last time MPs debated easing the conditions for a legal abortion, in February, the proposal was voted upon three times – producing a tie each time – and was thrown out. In June 1998 it was defeated by 10 votes in the opening weeks of a new conservative government.

The Socialist proposal would have allowed a woman to seek an abortion within 12 weeks of pregnancy if she believes a child would cause her serious personal, family or social conflict.

Socialists dragged their feet in the closing stages of their own government in 1995, despite insistent demands from their own ranks.

The latest proposal prompted opposition from the Church. Some 2,000 anti-abortion campaigners protested outside parliament on Monday.

The Socialist proposal would have allowed a woman to seek an abortion within 12 weeks of pregnancy if she believes a child would cause her serious personal, family or social conflict.

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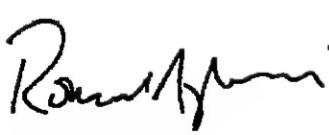
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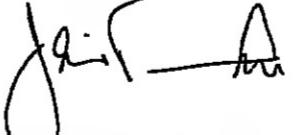
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South African troops fail to quell coup

SMOKE WAS still pouring from freshly torched and looted buildings in downtown Maseru last night, with occasional gunshots punctuating the rumble of distant mortar fire.

It was little more than 12 hours since the South African army had intervened to restore law and order to the capital of tiny Lesotho. But its first day of foreign combat since the end of apartheid appeared to have gone badly wrong, with key objectives – including the royal palace and the main army barracks on the edge of town – still in the hands of opposition demonstrators and Lesotho's mutinous army.

While South African troops continued to pound the Makoanyane army barracks with mortar fire as dusk fell, mobs of looters and stone-throwing youths were left with the run of the town.

A spokeswoman for the South African National Defence Forces, which had hoped to overawe resistance in a bloodless swoop, said three of its soldiers had been killed in fighting with the Lesotho Defence Forces and 11 injured.

A source in the Lesotho po-

lice, which has remained loyal to the beleaguered government of Prime Minister Phakalitha Mosisili, said two of the South Africans were killed along with 13 members of the Lesotho army early in the day after a South African task force tried to secure the strategic Khathie Dam in the mountainous interior. He confirmed there were other casualties, but could not say what the death toll was.

A Maseru hospital director, Piet McPherson, said five people were dead on arrival at his hospital and 49 were treated for injuries, including 29 gunshot wounds.

As its troops went into action, the South African government announced it was intervening at the request of Lesotho's constitutional monarch King Letsie III to restore the rule of law. The operation was authorised by the Home Affairs minister, Chief Mangosutho Buthelezi, who is standing in for President Nelson Mandela and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki while both are out of the country.

The operation was officially carried out under the aegis of the Southern African Development Community, but an expected troop contingent from Botswana had still not arrived by yesterday evening.

Lesotho, a mountainous and deeply impoverished Commonwealth country about the size of Belgium, has effectively been without government in recent days, as opposition demonstrators shut down government offices and state radio to protest the alleged rigging of general elections held last May.

Two weeks ago, soldiers

guarding the palace fired on police who were attempting to disperse a crowd of opposition demonstrators camped outside, killing one police officer. Junior officers in the traditionally pro-opposition army subsequently mutinied against their government-appointed commanders and forced them to resign. In recent days, most government ministers are believed to have fled the country.

Yesterday's fighting began shortly after dawn when 600 South African troops crossed the Caledon River in armoured vehicles from neighbouring



A protester lying in the road in an attempt to halt a South African military convoy in Maseru, capital of Lesotho, yesterday

AP

South Africa, supported by six helicopters. According to a civilian security officer working with the United Nations, the SADC troops took up positions at the city's two army barracks and the royal palace, and shooting broke out soon after.

According to a Western se-

curity source close to the op-
eration, the South Africans ap-
peared to have taken control of
the city at midday but then
began to withdraw from key ob-
jectives, including the palace,
leaving the city to the mob. As
night fell, angry opposition
demonstrators continued to
ring the palace, vowing revenge
for South Africa's "invasion". A

police source said he believed
the king was still trapped inside,
although it was not clear if he
was being held hostage.

A Western security expert –

who asked not to be named –
was scathing about South
Africa's decision to intervene
with such a small and appar-
ently badly directed force. "I

don't think they came with def-
inite objectives other than to
disarm the army and take the
palace, and they came with in-
sufficient numbers to over-
come what resistance they met.
When looting broke out they
said it was nothing to do with
them, it was up to the Lesotho
police to deal with it but there
simply weren't enough of them."

The British High Commis-
sioner, Peter Smith, said
Maseru's 100 British residents
had been advised to stay at
home, but several had taken
refuge in his house, while others
were attempting to join a convoy
at the US embassy awaiting a
South African armoured escort.

IN BRIEF

Angolan pact under threat

DIPLOMATIC efforts to halt the collapse of Angola's four-year-old peace pact are being thwarted because the government says it cannot guarantee the safe movement of international mediators, the United Nations office in Luanda said yesterday. The UN special envoy Issa Diallo is seeking to meet with Jonas Savimbi, the leader of the former rebel group UNITA, at the central highland town where he lives.

Author's return sparks protest

MUSLIM hard-liners staged angry protests in Bangladesh yesterday against author Taslima Nasrin, who whipped up a storm four years ago with her controversial books and has returned to the country after a self-imposed exile. Nearly 1,000

Muslim protesters offered prayers at a mosque and marched through Dhaka, the Bangladeshi capital, demanding that Nasrin be given the death sentence for blaspheming Islam.

Police arrest newlyweds

A NEWLYWED couple in Iowa was arrested over the weekend after police say they grew a little too angry with hotel clerks who had mistakenly given away their bridal suite. "All parties became upset," said Bill Kietzman, an agent with the state Division of Criminal Investigation. "It got pretty aggressive. Some punches were thrown, there was a lot of wrestling."

Sudan parties to meet

THE MAIN warring parties in Sudan's civil war will meet in early October to

Norwegian PM back at work

NORWEGIAN Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik will be back at work as planned today after more than three weeks' sick leave due to depression, his office said yesterday. "He'll be back on Thursday," Bondevik's spokesman Oeivind Oestang said.



King Abdul Aziz
(Ibn Saud)

23rd SEPTEMBER 1998

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IN THIS, THE 66TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF SAUDI ARABIA, WE ALSO CELEBRATE THE CENTENARY BY THE ISLAMIC CALENDAR OF THE RECAPTURE OF RIYADH BY THE EXILED YOUNG IBN SAUD.



K.S.A. 100 YEARS

Described by Chambers Encyclopaedia as "the outstanding Arab ruler of his time", Ibn Saud had the vision to bring together the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula in order to forge a single kingdom, founded upon strict adherence to Islam.

Banished was I from the heart of Arabia, Riyadh my home, had been stolen by others;

banished was I, and my father and mother, brothers and sisters, deprived of our birthright.

Sadness we felt for the years that denied us the feel of the sand of the Nejd in our hands.

Kindness we found in Kuwait beyond measure but kindness alone could not cure the pain of living in exile, a life without pleasure,

for pleasure, not nurtured in honour, will wither.

I knew from the earliest years of my living that I must return to the place of my birth.

They told me that only my death would await me,

(but fear is a far harsher master than death);

they warned of the dangers of crossing the desert but it was the desert that gave me breath.

They asked how a lad could recapture a city,

when put to the sword what my pride would be worth;

I asked how the seed, lying dry in the sand, at the first taste of rain can emerge from the earth.

"Who will ride at my side on this perilous venture?

Who will risk life and limb to expel Al Rashid?"

Sixty answered my call, young and brave, ooe and all.

"With all of our strength, we will give what you need;

we will stand by your side when the battle is joined until each of us falls - or Riyadh is freed."

It was not for the glory we rode from Kuwait;

we held faith as our shield and justice our sword.

I sought to regain the land of my fathers but in all I deferred to the will of the Lord.

We rode towards Riyadh with banners unfurled,

putting trust in the God who created the world.

Through a cold Ramadan we encamped in the desert; we fasted one month in the village of Haradh,

far away from the eyes of those who might think that folly could lead us to try to take Riyadh.

When the fasting was over, I summoned my kinsmen; without hesitation they answered my call.

Like shadows that slip over sand dunes at sunset we gathered in silence beneath Riyadh's wall.

On that night long ago, when the time came to act, I knew in my heart what it was to be free; the greatest good fortune in life for a man is to know he has reached for the best he can be.

Whatever might follow that cold, moonless night, we would know we had fought for a cause that was right.

I chose from my band a mere handful of men; each one read the risks from the look in my eyes.

We scaled the walls under cover of darkness; we watched for the sun to put light in the skies.

Outnumbered, we knew that our hope of success must depend in the end on our use of surprise.

In a fight it is true if you strike off the head of a man or an army, the battle is won.

We few faced a garrison ready to crush us; such odds left no question what had to be done.

The fate of the Amir of Riyadh was sealed. He must die for the wounds of Al Saud to be healed.

When Ajlan, the Amir, appeared in the open, we struck as the lion descends on its prey.

Bin Jelawi forced open the gate of the fortress; the rest of the brothers then joined in the fray.

The garrison knew that resistance was futile; Al Saud had returned to its home on that day.

Looking back through the decades, the taking of Riyadh was merely one step on a path, hard and long.

After many a battle, I put all my heart into building a nation, devout, proud and strong,

with justice its sword and faith as its shield,

in the land where the message of God was revealed.

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BARCLAYS	£4,000	17.0%	£186.87	£5,322.20
	£10,000	12.5%	£238.00	£14,280.00
	£16,000	Not available		
LLOYDS	£4,000	16.0%	£96.60	£5,800.00
	£10,000	13.0%	£237.95	£12,677.00
	£16,000	13.0%	£364.75	£21,885.00
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	£10,000	13.4%	£225.70	£13,541.80
	£16,000	Not available		

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Anwar Ibrahim with his wife, Azizah Ismail. She says the police may inject him with HIV

Troops surround Anwar's family

By RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
in Kuala Lumpur

SUPPORTERS of the imprisoned Malaysian opposition leader, Anwar Ibrahim, were struggling to keep his movement for reform alive yesterday, as soldiers and riot police surrounded his home and threatened to arrest his wife.

A day after invoking a draconian security law to detain Mr Anwar and 11 leading supporters, police accused his wife, Azizah Ismail, of inciting hostility against them by suggesting that her husband would be forcibly injected with the HIV virus in an effort to prove that he is a promiscuous bisexual.

"We have news that maybe Anwar's life is in danger," she was reported to have told the American television channel CNBC. "He may be given some injection of the HIV virus to prove whatever allegations ... that is why I am afraid for my husband's life." Last night a police helicopter hovered above

the house in suburban Kuala Lumpur and police and troops cleared away stands selling posters of Mr Anwar and tapes of his speeches.

There was no repeat of the mass demonstrations of the previous day and on Sunday when tens of thousands of Malaysians rallied in the centre of the city calling for the resignation of Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir sacked Mr Anwar as deputy leader and finance minister after police affidavits saying he engaged in promiscuous sex with men and women. But three weeks later no charges have been brought against him. Instead he and the 11 supporters are being held under the Internal Security Act (ISA) which allows indefinite detention without trial.

"I will not discount the possibility that more people will be picked up under the ISA as our investigations progress," Yaacob Amin of the Malaysian CID told *The Star* newspaper. At least 40 other demonstrators were dragged off the streets on Monday by plain-clothes police, as well as the heavy police presence, appeared to have broken the momentum of the protest movement. Opponents of Dr Mahathir said they believed the movement would continue but that they feared a broader crackdown, possibly after the departure of the Queen, whose official visit ends today.

"There is an overall climate of fear," said Parane Cumaraswamy, a lawyer and former president of the Malaysian Bar Association. "For decades we were sacrificing a great deal of social and political rights just to pro-

mote growth. We don't have an independent judiciary, we don't have a free place, police powers have increased, there's no place for independent, critical non-governmental organisations. Suddenly people wake up and find that the economy has gone down and that we are not allowed to speak up."

Professor Chandra Muzaffar of the University of Malaya, a civil rights campaigner who spent two months in jail under the ISA during Dr Mahathir's last crackdown 11 years ago, said: "It's a movement which takes its strength from two parts of society - the expanding middle class and the Islamic movement, and I don't think it's going to evaporate."

Dr Mahathir insisted the situation was stable. "There are a few thousand people following him [Anwar] but the majority of people are quite happy," he said.

Hopes fade for Middle East peace

BY ROBERT FISK
in Beirut

IF BILL CLINTON saves his presidency, he will have lost the Middle East. For he has thrown away any chance of pushing Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu to make a deal with the Palestinians. He has lost any hope of persuading the Arabs to support his campaign against Iraq. He has let go any prospect of convincing the Egyptians or the Saudis or the Syrians of accepting Washington's brokership of the "peace process". The Arab-Israeli crisis is now in free fall.

For what has the American president done to keep the peace in the Middle East? He has reiterated his declaration of war against "terror" - what he calls the "threat to all humankind". Yet not a word has he uttered against the Israeli threat to annex the Israeli-occupied West Bank. No strategy has he devised against Saddam Hussein's refusal to co-operate with UN inspectors. No message of support has he provided for President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, who remains the most powerful Arab voice for peace.

And thus no wonder is it that Egypt plans to honour its 1973 victory over the Israelis at the Suez Canal rather than the 1981 Camp David peace accord. No surprise that he can find no UN members to take "drastic measures" against Iraq - and no chance that the Arab world is prepared to trust the Oslo agreement which has allowed Israel to build more Jewish settlements on Arab land. Osama bin Laden, in the heights of Afghanistan, must have been convinced - watching the videotape of Bill Clinton's testimony - that his war against the United States can be won without a fight.

Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, says that he will proclaim a Palestinian state next year (albeit that this will be the second time he has declared such a nation) - and Mr Netanyahu is now saying that Mr Arafat's declaration would "annul the [Oslo] accords". According to the Palestinian Authority, this would be a "declaration of war".

So stand by for Israel's reconquest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. As for Iraq, we have only to listen to Martin Indyk, US assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs. "Today, outside the United States," he said last week, "not a single country in the world is calling for the use of force to respond to Saddam Hussein's latest refusal to co-operate."

Mr Mubarak is meanwhile planning a lavish celebration of the Egyptian crossing of the Suez canal a quarter of a century ago - complete with artistic, cultural and sporting events, the minting of special coins marking the Egyptian military victory, army bands, fireworks and the gathering of 20,000 military personnel and families of those killed in the 1973 Middle East war. The Egyptian warship which sank the Israeli destroyer *Eilat* will also participate in the celebrations.

As Mohamed Sayed Said, deputy director of the Al-Ahram strategic studies centre in Cairo, says: "Arab public

opinion ... wants to erase the memory of Camp David because of its extreme distance for the totally unjust policies of the United States and Israel towards the Arabs."

In Damascus, the government daily newspaper *Al-Thawra* is saying what many millions of Arabs believe, however odd (or exotic) the theory may seem in the West: that Monica Lewinsky was working for the Israeli intelligence organisation Mossad, tasked to destroy American pressure on Mr Netanyahu to abide by the Oslo accords.

When the scandal broke, Ms Lewinsky, who is Jewish, stated publicly that she hoped it would not harm US relations with Israel. In the event, it has rendered Clinton so impotent that Washington would not dare oppose Israeli plans to enlarge Jewish settlements on Arab land - and thus contribute to



Mubarak: Most powerful Arab voice for peace

the destruction of the Oslo agreement.

And what did Mr Clinton offer two days ago? An "anti-terror" pact - the thrust of his UN speech on Monday - that, while denying a Western-Islamic conflict, made it clear that the West's supposed enemies in the world were Muslim.

His speech, word for word, has been closely studied here, especially the following words: "False prophets may use and abuse any religion to justify whatever political objectives they have, even cold-blooded murder. Son may have the world believe that almighty God himself, the merciful, grants a licence to kill - that is not our understanding of Islam."

But the very word "Islam" showed what Mr Clinton was thinking about. The Arabs remember how, after the Israeli massacre at Qana in 1996 - a "tragic error" according to the US president called the slaughter a "tragedy", as if it were some natural disaster. The tomb of the Israeli murderer of 29 Palestinians at the Hebron mosque is now a shrine - but this had no place in Mr Clinton's UN speech. True, he said there should be no "dividing line" between Muslims, Jews, Protestants, Catholics, Serbs and Albanians - an interesting list since it suggested that Serbs were not Christians and Albanians were not Muslims - but in the Middle East, the message was clear: Muslim rather than non-Muslim men of violence were the world's enemies.

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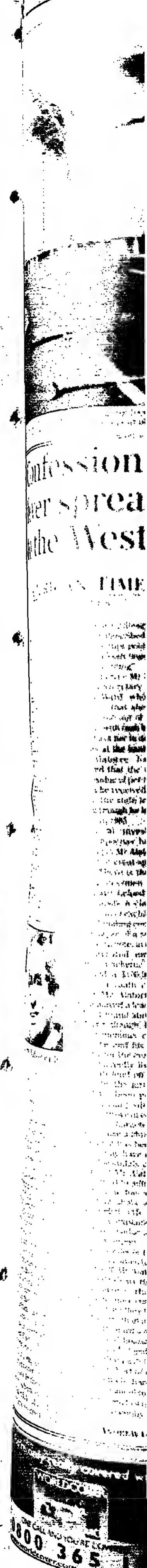
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Gusts of wind from the Atlantic bending trees in San Juan, Puerto Rico, yesterday before the arrival of Hurricane Georges, which battered the Virgin Island of St Croix on Monday as it swept across the Caribbean. *Ana Martinez*

Confession fever spreads to the West

AMERICAN TIMES LOS ANGELES

WHEN IT comes to fending off scandal, Los Angeles city councilman Richard Alatorre knows a thing or two - and we're not just talking about lies about sex.

Here is a man who, according to his accusers, has regularly been spotted with a crust of white powder under his nostrils, who has emerged from meetings with political allies and business associates with wads of \$100 bills in his hands, and who has an uncanny knack for extracting financial gain from ruinously expensive public business schemes - whether it is a loan on a new house or funds to launch charities run by his latest wife.

His life is being pored over by federal prosecutors, and embarrassing confessions have been extracted under oath. There is even another woman in his life - in his case a former secretary who is taking revenge



Alatorre: Wads of cash

for being jilted by pouring her heart out to federal investigators.

Mr Alatorre has been called many things, few of them complimentary, and conversation among both supporters and virulent critics is rarely temperate. Jackal, vampire, snake - Mr Alatorre has been compared to the whole menagerie. It is a wonder, in fact, that he has survived a full 13 years as the city representative for East Los Angeles, and a long stint before that in the California state legislature.

Long considered unsalable as head of the city budget and finance committee, he is suddenly under attack on several fronts at once. First came the leaked revelation that a company run by political supporters of Mr Alatorre's had won a \$65m (£30m) contract for a proposed East LA underground rail line, even though two other companies had performed better in a technical survey. In the ensuing furor, the scheme collapsed, the head of LA's Mass Transit Authority resigned and Mr

Alatorre's colleague, Gloria Molina, described him as "a very corrupt politician who has his bloody fingerprints all over this thing".

Next came Mr Alatorre's former secretary and lover, Linda Ward, who claimed not only that she saw her boss come out of meetings bulging with cash but that he would ask her to deposit the money at the bank for him. Mr Alatorre has since claimed that the cash was the residue of per diem payments he received when he was at the state legislature - even though he left Sacramento in 1985.

Federal investigations and subpoenas have been hurtling in Mr Alatorre's direction at great speed ever since. There is the case of the businessmen who say they have helped Mr Alatorre falsify a claim for a home loan in exchange for a public building contract. Or the collapse of a scheme to renovate a hotel in which the city invested more than \$10m - a scheme that also provided a \$100,000 donation to a youth charity in which Mr Alatorre's wife Angie played a leading role.

Most humiliating for Mr Alatorre, though, has been an acrimonious civil case which he and his wife are fighting for the custody of a niece currently living with them. To fend off counter-claims by the girl's father, they have been put in the embarrassing situation of trying to prove in court they have the character necessary to raise a child.

So far it has been a fiasco. Not only have all the financial scandals come out again, but Mr Alatorre has been forced to admit under oath that he has a past as both an alcoholic and a cocaine addict. (Mr Alatorre previously explained away the white residue about his nostrils as either "dandruff, denture powder or Doritos".)

When it comes to defending himself, Mr Alatorre has preferred to leave the talking to his lawyers. His friends have done more running for him, but even they have reasoned in less than moralistic terms. "Richard's not a stupid guy and taking cash is stupid, stupid, stupid. And depositing that cash in a bank is nothing short of moronic. It's extremely hard to believe," one anonymous supporter argued to a magazine columnist recently.

ANDREW GUMBLE

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Slovakian PM enlists stars to woo voters

BY ADAM LEBOR
in Bratislava

SHE CAN certainly turn heads, but can Claudia Schiffer turn around the political fortunes of Slovakia's controversial Prime Minister? That is the question on the streets of Bratislava this week as Slovaks consider the latest electoral stunt by Vladimir Mečiar.

The German model is one of a trio of celebrities drafted in by Mr Mečiar to boost his standing before the country goes to the polls this weekend.

Along with Ms Schiffer, who has not previously been known for her interest in central European politics, the controversial nationalist leader has received bizarre morale-boosting visits from Gerard Depardieu, the French actor, and Claudia Cardinale, the Italian actress.

Depardieu said he had had a wonderful time with Mečiar. "I am very glad that I could accept the invitation of Mr Vladimir and come among you," he told a rally of Mečiar's

supporters. "His surname is difficult for me to pronounce so he calls me Gerard and I call him Vladimír. Despite meeting for the first time today, I had the impression that we had known each other for a very long time. I spent a very nice Sunday with nice people. I drank good wine and saw the joys of life," he added.

All three visits received saturation coverage in the state-controlled television and pro-government newspapers, although locals quipped that Ms Cardinale's role in *The Pink Panther* with the late Peter Sellers made her a suitable supporter of the comedy of errors that is Slovak politics.

For unlike its neighbours Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic, Slovakia has failed to make the first round of either Nato or EU accession, although this year it tilted the election law in favour of the governing coalition that drew protests from the EU and the United States. Opaque privatisation deals saw key industries sold off to government supporters, and there are alleged links between organised crime and sections of the government, particularly the Slovak Intelligence Service (SIS).

Prime Minister Mečiar's latest electoral stunts are unlikely to reassure those in the West who question his government's commitment to serious political debate. It is unclear whether any money was paid for the celebrities' visits, or how much.

Both the four-party opposition who hold a commanding lead in opinion polls, at around 58 per cent, compared with 36 per cent for the governing coalition, and Western diplomats say they do not discount last-minute dirty tricks by the Government to ensure it remains in power.

However Mečiar has promised that the elections, which will be observed by international monitors, will be both free and fair, and that he will respect the result.



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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

SMG ponders higher bid for VCI

SCOTTISH MEDIA GROUP is considering raising its bid for VCI, the video reproduction company, to 130p share, trumping an 120p-a-share offer from retail giant Kingfisher. Analysts said SMG, which has already snapped up 26 per cent of VCI at 80p a share, could bid 130p for the remainder of the share capital and still end up paying less for VCI than Kingfisher, which tabled a bid worth £46.8m on Monday. SMG is expected to make a decision before the end of the week. A spokesman for the company refused to comment. VCI shares closed unchanged at 119.5p.

Millar's £90,000 dismissal claim

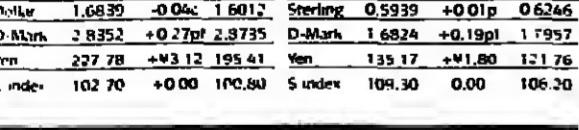
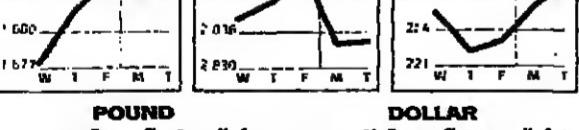
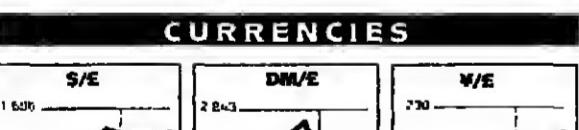
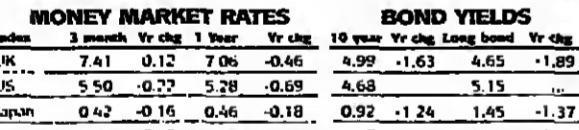
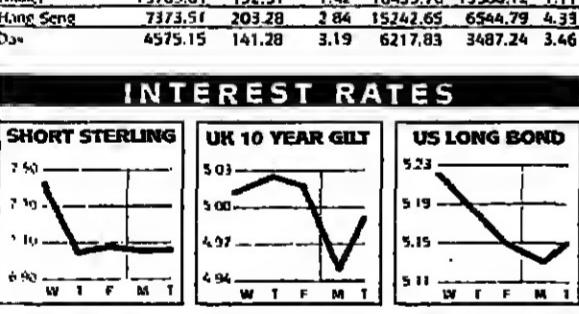
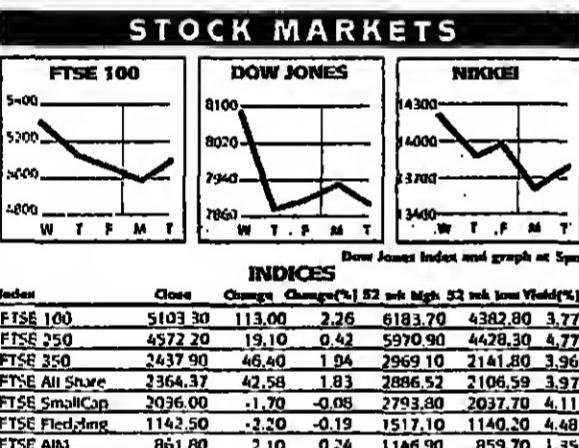
ANDREW MILLAR, the whistleblower sacked by British Biotech, is claiming around £90,000 for his wrongful dismissal plus undisclosed damages for libel from the drug development company, it emerged yesterday. Mr Millar, the former head of clinical research, is being sued for breach of contract by British Biotech and yesterday submitted his defence in the High Court case. He was ousted in April after airing his concerns over two of the company's drugs to shareholders.

Tobacco firms fight EU ads ban

THE TOBACCO industry yesterday launched a legal challenge to European Union plans to ban tobacco advertising. The Tobacco Manufacturers' Association (TMA), which groups Gallaher, Imperial Tobacco and Rothmans, the leading UK cigarette makers, claimed that a ban would be "illegal" and breach European law. They will ask the High Court to refer an EU directive banning almost all tobacco ads from 2006 to the European Court of Justice. The TMA said that the European Commission had no powers to legislate on a public health issue. The anti-smoking pressure group ASH condemned the legal move as "pointless legal posturing".

Crestco hands £5m to customers

CRESTCO, the security settlements system, is to make a £5m rebate to its customers, which should benefit every stockbroker, custodian and bank dealing in the UK. Crestco's pre-tax profits doubled to £11.4m in the six months to June. The company will pay a first dividend.



SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

Goldman partners call for float to be delayed

BY ANDREW GARFIELD
Financial Editor

THE FLOTATION of Wall Street investment bank Goldman Sachs is looking increasingly uncertain, with a significant minority of senior partners calling for the listing to be delayed or called off because of volatile financial markets.

The doubts have been compounded by problems with the 100 or so retired partners who have objected to attempts to

renegotiate a formula guaranteeing the value of their shareholdings in the light of the fall of 40 to 50 per cent in investment bank shares since the financial crisis broke in August. This has wiped up to \$15bn off the \$30bn value of the bank at the market peak in July.

Goldman's 300 partners are scheduled to meet early next month to finalise the terms of the listing. In the meantime, senior management has been left in charge of the flotation.

However, the confidence of Goldman's co-chairmen, Jon Corzine and Henry Paulson, who until last week were insisting the float would go ahead, has begun to ebb as opponents

have seized on the stock market listing. However, Mr Corzine has been seeking to renegotiate these terms to reflect the fact that if the value of their holdings remained static while the overall value of the bank fell, they would end up with an unacceptably large share of Goldman's total capital. This would hamper attempts to redistribute shares Goldman's "marzipan layer" – senior executives

just below partnership level – which was one of the key justifications advanced by Mr Corzine for changing the structure of Wall Street's last sizeable partnership firm.

With only 10 per cent of the stock to be sold to outsiders, and staff barred from selling for three to five years, the bank has insisted all along that the listing is not about raising cash.



Barclaycard's Northampton HQ yesterday. The UK's first credit cards were issued there in 1966, now it will suffer 400 job losses Keith Dobney

Barclays slashes 1,100 jobs as card war rages

BY ANDREW VERITY

Barclaycard, said he "very much regretted" the job cuts. But he insisted it was necessary to ward off aggressive competition from new entrants, many of them American banks seeking to penetrate the European credit-card business.

The bank said that more than a quarter of the 4,400 jobs at Barclaycard would be cut to improve efficiency by introducing advanced computer systems designed to enhance customer service.

Northampton, where Barclaycard issued the UK's first credit cards in 1966, will suffer 400 job losses, while Barclaycard's 70-strong Birmingham branch is likely to close completely. Other jobs will be lost at Kirby, Manchester and Teesside.

Bob Potts, chief executive of

backs, Susan Hamilton-Smith, national officer of Unifi, the finance union at Barclays, said: "Staff have been aware for some time that jobs may be on the line, but this is really bad news."

Mr Potts said he was "very aware that many employees will be extremely concerned at the news they've heard today", but refused to rule out compulsory redundancies. He said staff would be treated with dignity and helped to find new jobs.

The cuts go hand-in-hand with a £30m investment in new technology designed to automate basic functions such as allocating a credit limit to new customers. Barclays Bank, which gets 12.5 per cent of its

profits from Barclaycard, has already spent £100m installing a new computer system.

Barclaycard remains the most popular UK credit card, with 9.4 million cards in issue, but in recent years its market share has dipped below 30 per cent. It has felt increasingly threatened by US card companies wanting to establish themselves in the UK as a springboard to move into the rest of Europe.

Low-cost US operations such as MBNA and Household Finance Corporation have already succeeded in issuing more than a million cards each by mail-shipping customers and advertising lower rates of interest.

But while Barclays said the job cuts were driven by competition, it resisted suggestions that it would cut its annual percentage rate – one of the highest at 22.9 per cent. Shares in Barclays rose ahead of the market from 1063 to 1090p.

Outlook, page 19

City spin doctors sell out for £27m

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

Mr Carlisle, who joined Dewe Rogerson in 1970, will join the board of the enlarged agency with responsibility for business development and client services. Mr Dewe and Mr de Uphaugh are both retiring while Mr Rogerson will act as a consultant to the new group focusing on New York and Hong Kong.

The share awards for the top 40 staff will range in value from £30,000 to £200,000 depending on seniority and experience.

The remaining 290 employees of Dewe Rogerson will each receive shares worth £750. The shares will be dispensed in three equal installments over a two-year period in order to retain staff following the takeover.

The enlarged group will trade as Cigate Dewe Rogerson and will have 1,200 clients and fee income of £50m, putting it among the UK's top three PR and advertising groups alongside Shandwick and Lowe Bell.

Cigate is paying £13.3m in cash and £1.1m in shares for Dewe Rogerson. In addition

Dewe Rogerson is repurchasing a further £2.6m of preference shares from its four founders.

David Wright, Incepta's chief executive, said it was paying one times Dewe Rogerson's fee income. The deal would be earnings enhancing in the first year.

Dewe Rogerson built up its business on the back of the last government's privatisations, advising on floatations of BT, British Gas, BE, British Steel and the water and electricity companies. Cigate's clients include Charles Schwab, the bus group Henlys and Granada.



Tony Carlisle: Gets £27m and a seat on new board

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

BLUE CHIPS staged a comeback. Footsie reclaimed its position above the crucial 5,000 points level with a 1.13 gain to 5,103.3. Trading was busy with share turnover nudging one billion. Supporting shares had a quiet session.

Take-over stories swirled with Reed International, the media group, and GRE, the insurer, likely targets. Reed, up 31.25p to 534.25p, was said to be in the sights of a US group and GRE, up 5p to 258p, was regarded as a candidate for Allied Dunbar.

Derek Pain, page 23

NEW YORK

AN EARLY rally on Wall Street petered out on fears that US corporate profits would be eroded as global economies slow down. As European markets closed, the Dow Jones index was down 68.25 at 7,673.

Investors around the world are increasingly pinning their hopes on a US interest-rate cut. Some hope that the Federal Reserve may lower rates on 29 September and are looking for any hint of this from the Fed chairman, Alan Greenspan, in his Senate address on economic issues today.

TOKYO

STOCKS REBOUNDED from a 12-year low on expectations that Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi will be pressured to promise more measures to lift the economy.

Drug makers and railways led the rally, as investors favoured "safe haven" industries. The Nikkei 225 index rose 1.42 per cent to 13,789.81. Nomura Securities, Japan's largest brokerage, fell on reports it will have to inject \$380m into a US affiliate. Three of Japan's big five chipmakers – Toshiba, Hitachi and NEC – have cut their earnings forecasts in the past month.

HONG KONG

THE HANG Seng index posted a 2.8 per cent gain to close up 203.3 at 7,373.5, with traders saying most of the gains were prompted by short covering after Monday night's rally on Wall Street caught investors by surprise.

HSBC, Hong Kong Telecom and Hutchison Whampoa, which together make up almost half of the index, paced gains. Meanwhile, Hong Kong's Monetary Authority said it spent \$8.8bn of its foreign-currency reserves to buy stocks and futures last month, less than many analysts estimated.

FRANKFURT

THE XETRA DAX rallied 110

Duisenberg is too leisurely by half

WIM DUISENBERG, president of the European Central Bank, has decided on one thing at least – that the Queen's head, or any other national emblem for that matter, will be erased from Britain's bank notes should we opt to join the single currency. So this is the sort of trivia Mr Duisenberg is occupying his time with, is it?

With just three and a bit months left to kick off time for the single currency, not much else seems to have been settled at all, to judge by the ECB president's evidence yesterday to the European Parliament's monetary affairs subcommittee, and to the dismay of many already signed up to the euro. The Queen's head must go even if everything else is still up in the air, seems to be about the sum of it.

Thus it has not yet been decided to what interest rate the eleven countries forming the Euro should converge, though the hint seems to be towards the lowest common denominator, regardless of the possibly disastrous effects of this on the boom economies of Italy, Ireland and Spain. Nor has it been decided



OUTLOOK

ed whether this convergence should take place in one jump or through a series of little moves.

Then there's the little matter of precisely how monetary policy should be determined, whether by reference to money supply, as in Germany, or an inflation target, as in Britain.

The ECB has said it should be a mixture of the two, but has yet to explain the proportions. And finally, the ECB has to decide which rate of inflation – which index – it is going to use for inflation targeting. Given the imminence of the single currency, it might be thought that all

these matters require rather more urgent attention than they seem to be getting.

According to Mr Duisenberg everything is proceeding according to schedule. At best this seems a dangerously leisurely one. It is perhaps just as well for Britain that we are not entering in the first round after all, for it is surely bizarre that such important matters of detail remain undecided so close to D day. A general that went into battle so ill prepared could reasonably expect slaughter.

By rights it should be Mr Duisenberg's head on the chopper, not the Queen's. Perhaps unfortunately, it seems rather easier to behead the queen than a president of the ECB. Mr Duisenberg cannot officially be removed until the end of his eight year term in 2006.

Free Internet

WELL DONE DIXONS, for being the first to offer an all singing and dancing internet service for free. The days when £10-£15 a month was the cost of being connected to the Web

are finally over; it would seem. But hold on a moment; it's not free, is it? As anyone with children or an anorak as a lodger will know, the effect of being wired to the Internet is to double your telephone bill, for every three minutes on the net is the cost of a local call. And boy does all that surfing add up. This is why Dixons, or rather Energis, which is providing the service to Dixons, is able to do it for free.

What Energis, the telecoms group, gets from the deal is a share of each call terminated, which given that Freeserve is almost bound to become one of the biggest service providers in the UK, could be a quite considerable source of revenue. On top of that it will get advertising from Dixons and others that pay to be on screen, while there could be big money to be made out of electronic commerce.

All in all, it's a wonder that so many service providers, including astonishingly the internet service offered by BT, have been able to get away with charging for so long. For telephone companies, the extra traffic provided by the internet should be as much payment as they need.

One reason they have got away with it is that the Internet industry has been imported from the US, where local calls are free and service providers thus have to charge a subscription in order to recoup their costs. Here in Britain the economics can be made to work the other way round.

All of which goes to show how far telephony tariffs have to go to become competitive with the US. It is still not possible to pay a flat rate rental in the UK for unlimited local telephone use, nor is there any likelihood of this happening while BT's local loop is so interwoven with the rest of the network. Furthermore, no competitor is going to risk starting a price war with BT by taking the initiative.

So, for the time being, ordinary domestic customers will simply have to live with much higher incremental costs for Internet usage than their American counterparts, notwithstanding the new free Internet service being offered by Dixons and Energis. Something, perhaps, at which Gordon Brown's competitiveness review should take a long hard look.

Barclaycard

THE CREDIT-CARD business is money for old rope. How could it be otherwise when base rates are 7.5 per cent and yet card issuers can get away with charging their customers compound rates of 23 per cent? Barclaycard has sat at the top of the pile for the last 30 years, growing fat on a mixture of customer inertia and competitive apathy.

Like other industry leaders, however, Barclaycard is finding that the market doesn't stand still after all.

Ten years ago there were 80 credit cards in circulation and Barclaycard only had to worry about serious competition from Access, Visa and Mastercard. Now there are 1,300 varieties on offer. Even Guide Dogs for the Blind has one. More seriously, the supermarkets, direct banks and US finance houses have arrived on the scene with rates to make the eyes water.

Barclaycard retorts that it is still good value for money, pointing out that two thirds of its customers clear their accounts before they have to pay interest. But when the

payments do start they snowball painlessly. For the increasing numbers who live in a state of perpetual debt, a low APR and shorter interest free period makes better economic sense.

Barclaycard has tried to stem the tide of defections by tying up Visa so that it no longer markets itself independently. It has also led the way in offering extras like cheap electricity, air fares and telephone bills. But having to spend £9,000 to earn a free toaster is the kind of offer most of us can decline.

Finally, Barclaycard is grasping the nettle and making its staff pay for its increasing vulnerability. A quarter of the workforce or 1,100 jobs are, to use the company's quaint phraseology, going to "fall away", as Barclaycard replaces labour with new technology.

Aside from the cost-cutting, however, there is not a single mention of any new strategy to head off the competition. The latest fall in profits suggests that Barclaycard's spectacular margins are already under pressure. If it wants to survive at all long term, it may have to think of cutting rates as well as jobs.

Murdoch and Saudi prince close in on German TV deal

PLANS TO create a pan-European television group involving Rupert Murdoch, Silvio Berlusconi, Germany's Leo Kirch and Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal are nearing completion.

Reports from an annual sales conference of Mediaset, Mr Berlusconi's media group, suggest that the Italian former prime minister, Mr Murdoch and Prince Alwaleed will invest \$2bn in return for up to 25 per cent of Mr Kirch's privately-owned media empire.

Tarak Ben Ammar, an adviser to Prince Alwaleed and a member of the Mediaset board, said the negotiations were going ahead. "The Kirch Group rep-

resents the only real opportunity in Europe," he added.

Earlier this week Fedele Confalonieri, the Mediaset chairman, confirmed for the first time that a deal was on the table. "Our company was one of the first broadcasters to attempt to tap into the sporting and film rights held by British Sky Broadcasting, the satellite television group in which Mr Murdoch holds a 41 per cent stake. The alliance would create a powerful company capable of taking on Canal Plus, the French giant that has a stranglehold on much of Europe's pay-TV market.

Meanwhile Jan Mojto, a Kirch executive, said: "We're at the last stage of the game and we'll know next year how things turn out."

However, a spokeswoman

for Mr Murdoch's News International said suggestions that a deal was close were "speculation".

If successful, the agreement would create a pan-European television group with interests in Germany, Italy, France and Spain. It would also be able to

tap into the sporting and film rights held by British Sky Broadcasting, the satellite television group in which Mr Murdoch holds a 41 per cent stake. The alliance would create a powerful company capable of taking on Canal Plus, the French giant that has a stranglehold on much of Europe's pay-TV market.

Prince Alwaleed already has a close association with Mr Murdoch, having bought shares in the publicly quoted News Corporation last year.



Rupert Murdoch (left) and Prince Alwaleed bin Talal are set to invest \$2bn each in Leo Kirch's media empire

Jobs will go in Tarmac shake-up

TARMAC yesterday became the latest UK company to announce job cuts as a result of deteriorating markets.

The company blamed a fall in orders in the UK and overseas for a radical shake-up of its engineering business which will lead to dozens of redundancies.

Tarmac is to merge its civil engineering and international units, with the closure of the international division's head office in Kent. The businesses, which employ 7,800 people worldwide, will be run from the Wolverhampton headquarters of the civil engineering division. Although most job losses are expected from administrative staff, some plant workers were

also set to lose their jobs, said sources close to the company.

Sir Neville Simms, group chief executive, did not specify the number of redundancies but said the merger would "inevitably lead to job losses". He said the restructuring would yield cost savings of up to £5m a year and would help the company weather the downturn.

Sir Neville said UK orders had fallen largely as a result of the Government's decision to slash road building. The company reported a 29 per cent rise in interim pre-tax profits to £49.7m on turnover up 5 per cent to £1.51bn. Investment column, page 23

WHAT A

GORGEOUS

LOOKING

WARRANTY.



With its distinctive, sculpted lines, the Jaguar V8 XJ Series is one of the most striking luxury cars in the world. It has also been rated one of the most reliable in the UK*. No wonder the Jaguar V8 XJ Series' comprehensive 3-year/60,000 miles warranty often gets overlooked.

Please call 0800 70 80 60 for information on Jaguar Cars and Jaguar Financial Services. Internet: www.jaguar.com *Source: What Car? Magazine/Lex Survey 1998.

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Fund	Net	Buy	+/-	TM	Int.	Int.	Fund	Net	Buy	+/-	TM	Int.	Int.	Fund	Net	Buy	+/-	TM	Int.	Int.		
ABM AMRO Pensions Ltd	-200	229.54	-0.51	3.62	5.00		UK Growth	130.08	138.70	120	1.20	5.00		UK Smaller Cos	70.73	75.49	-0.56	5.25				
GrowthIncome	200.25	229.54	-0.51	3.62	5.00		UK Growth	103.91	120.00	-2.30	0.00	5.00		Min American	162.10	172.30	120	0.00	5.00			
Invest Income	141.05	181.00	-1.00	6.00	5.00		UK Growth	121.00	120.00	1.00	2.00	5.00		American Growth	65.75	67.17	-0.79	5.50				
UK Smaller Cos	117.65	123.00	-1.50	1.50	5.00		Balance	56.48	58.00	0.40	2.00	5.00		American Smaller	103.40	112.00	120	0.00	5.00			
Global Income	131.05	130.00	-1.00	1.00	5.00		Regency	72.35	72.35	0.00	1.00	5.00		American Small	104.20	122.00	120	0.00	5.00			
High Income	55.74	55.74	0.00	0.00	5.00		United Share	55.54	55.54	0.00	0.00	5.00		Managed Growth	120.40	125.40	120	0.00	5.00			
Global Bonds	55.29	50.01	-1.00	0.00	5.00		United Share	55.54	55.54	0.00	0.00	5.00		Managed Growth	120.40	125.40	120	0.00	5.00			
Global Bonds - UK	55.29	50.01	-1.00	0.00	5.00		United Share	55.54	55.54	0.00	0.00	5.00		Managed Growth	120.40	125.40	120	0.00	5.00			
ABP Growth Trust Ltd	4	4	0	0	0		Family Fund Managers Ltd	122.16	120.50	0.75	0.00	5.00		Managed Growth	120.40	125.40	120	0.00	5.00			
4 Baltic Bridge Funds, London SE1 2BB	2008	184.33	150.50	0.75	0.00	5.00	Family Fund Managers Ltd	122.16	120.50	0.75	0.00	5.00		Managed Growth	120.40	125.40	120	0.00	5.00			
TDI 01/71 7872 7079	100	100	0.00	0.00	5.00		Family Fund Managers Ltd	122.16	120.50	0.75	0.00	5.00		Managed Growth	120.40	125.40	120	0.00	5.00			
American Acc	303.39	320.00	-2.30	0.00	5.00		Family Fund Managers Ltd	122.16	120.50	0.75	0.00	5.00		Managed Growth	120.40	125.40	120	0.00	5.00			
American Acc	141.05	141.05	0.00	0.00	5.00		Family Fund Managers Ltd	122.16	120.50	0.75	0.00	5.00		Managed Growth	120.40	125.40	120	0.00	5.00			
American Acc	130.05	130.00	-1.00	0.00	5.00		Family Fund Managers Ltd	122.16	120.50	0.75	0.00	5.00		Managed Growth	120.40	125.40	120	0.00	5.00			
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American Acc	130.05	130.00	-1.00	0.00	5.00		Family Fund Managers Ltd	122.16	120.5													

News Analysis: Supermarkets may advertise cheaper food, but a price war is not in their interests

Tesco to serve up new jobs for 10,000

By NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

has become increasingly uncertain.

It is in the midst of an Office of Fair Trading investigation which will decide if the major supermarkets exploit their huge buying power to make excess profits. Inflation has all but disappeared, making sales growth more difficult to achieve.

Also, the threat of a price war has reappeared after a long period of relative stability. Asda and Sainsbury's have launched price promotions in the last few days, and Tesco has said it too will cut prices.

Tesco yesterday took issue with all of these concerns. On the OFT inquiry, the company says it believes there is no case to answer.

Responding to accusations that the supermarkets used their power to cut prices paid to farmers for meat, but failed to pass those savings on to consumers, Tesco's finance director, Andrew Higginson, said:

"We make no money on meat." He said the difference between farm prices and those that are charged at the supermarket check-outs was accounted for by improved meat processing arrangements and other cost increases in the food chain.

Mr Higginson said the supermarkets were facing a cost squeeze as food price inflation disappeared while other costs, such as wage settlements, continued to rise.

Analysts agreed that the OFT inquiry was unlikely to lead to any action. Clive Vaughan of Verdict, the retail consultants, said: "We have a premium food retail sector in



Tesco, whose chief executive, Terry Leahy, yesterday visited a branch in Cheapside, London, reported a slowdown in sales Neville Elder

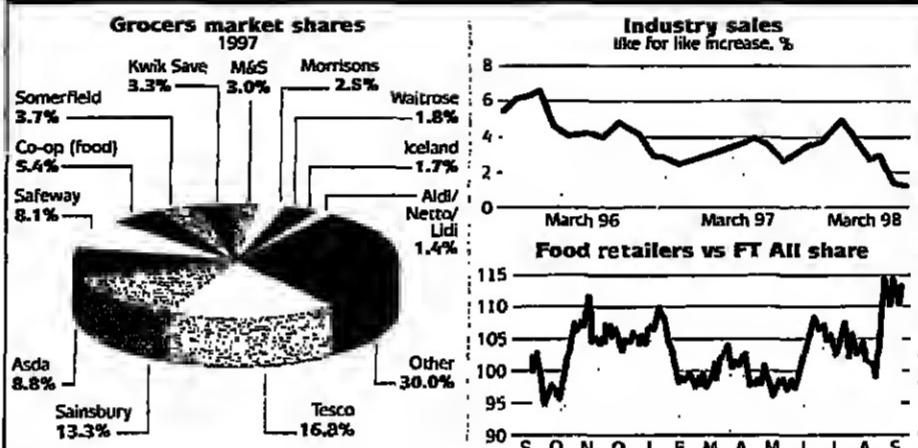
this country, because that is what consumers want. They do not want to shop in big cheap sheds. They had that 20 years ago with people like Tesco, and it failed."

Although an internal Treasury report has shown that British consumers pay higher prices than Americans for food and drink, experts say there are several obvious reasons for this. One is that America is one extremely large single market with no import duties to increase prices. Other factors include lower land prices, which mean lower store rent costs, and far lower vehicle fuel prices, which cuts the cost of distribution.

Further support for the supermarkets' position is expected to come in the next few days in a McKinsey report on global competitiveness. It is thought that the report will single out UK food retailing as one of the most efficient and competitive sectors.

Analysts said a food price

TOUGHER COMPETITION IN FOOD RETAILING



UK groups such as Tesco to be able to benefit from similar economies of scale.

"We would welcome the opportunity to become larger in the UK so we can compete on the world stage," said Mr Reid. "Otherwise they [the major global rivals] will come here and buy up some of our companies."

Tesco's overseas stores at the moment account for just 2 per cent of group sales. The supermarkets in Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic recorded a £5m loss on sales of £130m.

The Lotus outlets in Thailand, acquired earlier this year, have recorded a £1m loss on sales of £30m since they became part of the group in May.

Tesco's group sales rose by 7.2 per cent to £2.2bn in the first half of the year. The interim dividend was raised by 6 per cent to 1.25p per share.

The shares, which have fallen from their 202p peak in July, rose 8p to 169p.

IN BRIEF

Powerscreen posts £48m loss

POWERSCREEN
International, the troubled Northern Ireland-based engineer, plunged into the red due to a big loss at one of its subsidiaries.

A £50.2m loss at Matbro, the agricultural machinery subsidiary being investigated by the Serious Fraud Office for accounting irregularities, contributed to a £47.6m group loss in the year to the end of March. Last year the company posted a £15.8m profit.

Leaving Mulberry

MULBERRY, the luxury goods maker whose shares have been hit by profits warnings, said yesterday that Colin Ingram, its retail director, is to leave and will not be replaced. Mulberry's retail functions will report direct to the board. Demand for Mulberry's leather luggage has been hit by the strong pound and the economic crisis in Asia. Earlier this year Mulberry reported a firm loss.

Dexion merger

DEXION, the materials handling and storage systems business owned by the private investment group, Apax and Partners, is to merge with Constructor.

The new company, Constructor Dexion Group, will have sales of £350m. The group will be 8 per cent owned by Dexion management, 42 per cent by Apax and 50 per cent by Constructor's owner, the Norwegian group Aker.

Order for Airbus

IBERIA is to acquire up to 11 Airbus planes valued at about \$1.4bn (£830m), helping Spain's state-controlled airline to prepare for sale in 1999. Iberia ordered six long-haul A340s, with options on another five, for delivery between 1999 and 2003.

German buyout

ELECTRA FLEMING has launched one of Germany's biggest venture-capital deals by backing the management buyout of retailer Deutsche Woolworth for DM950m (£340m). Electra Fleming is investing DM146m for a 90 per cent stake, with most of the cost financed by debt.

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
African Gold (F)	1.1m (0.678m)	-0.05m (0.255m)	-0.05p (0.25p)	n/a	-	20.10.98
Aquarius (I)	26.2m (15.7m)	3.55m (2.3m)	10.72p (7.52p)	3.4p (3.31p)	23.11.98	20.10.98
Bredon (I)	8.1m (6.9m)	2.15m (1.77m)	5.36p (4.21p)	2.31p (2.11p)	30.10.98	15.10.98
Clinical Computing (I)	1.6m (1.4m)	0.255m (0.078m)	0.3p (0.3p)	n/a	-	-
Gyrus Group (F)	5.7m (5.5m)	-0.1m (-2.5m)	-14.5p (-14.2p)	n/a	-	-
ICM Computer Grp.(F)	3.43m (2.51m)	0.77m (0.25m)	1.75p (-)	26.11.98	20.09.98	
Secure Trust Banking(I)	(-)	5.4m (2.05m)	2.52p (2.05p)	0.01p	05.11.98	20.09.98
Syntex (I)	12.7m (10.6m)	3.73m (2.6m)	11.6p (9.7p)	2.5p (-)	27.10.98	20.09.98
Tamesis (I)	1.4m (1.3m)	48.7m (38.6m)	3.2p (2.5p)	3.0p (3.0p)	02.12.98	20.09.98
Tesco (I)	8.2m (7.7m)	37.0m (35.0m)	3.87p (3.70p)	1.25p (1.18p)	30.11.98	20.09.98
Tutor (I)	5.9m (5.7m)	0.875m (0.457m)	1.5p (1.0p)	1.5p (1.0p)	16.11.98	20.09.98
United Industries (I)	30.2m (19.5m)	0.55m (1.42m)	1.0p (2.71p)	0.94p (0.85p)	20.11.98	19.10.98

(F) - Final (I) - Interim

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Russia 'misused World Bank \$1.4bn'

ALLEGATIONS that Russia squandered, and even stole, international loans intensified yesterday with a fresh claim of wrong-doing - this time, that it mis-spent more than \$1bn of World Bank funds.

Russia's Audit Chamber added its voice to a growing chorus of concern about the fate of billions of dollars which were lent to Moscow in a vain effort to avert a melt-down, including the first tranche of a \$23bn IMF-supervised rescue package.

The chamber, a budget watchdog under parliament, has concluded that the government misused a \$1.4bn World Bank loan by channelling the money into its cash-starved budget and into servicing foreign debts, instead of on structural reforms, as intended. A senior official also claimed that an audit of the Russian Central Bank had uncovered "gross violations" of the law.

Although the chamber has a record of criticising the government with little result, it is far from alone. Russia's chief auditor, Vasyanin Sokolov, has said that the Central Bank stole or wasted billions of dollars from the IMF - a claim which prompted a call from Tony Blair for an overhaul of the fund and the World Bank.

Russia's procurator-general has also announced an investigation into the bank, saying that preliminary findings suggested irregularities. The allegations diminish still further Russia's chances of getting any more funds out of the world's lenders, in particular they will further jeopardise the next \$4.5bn instalment of the now discredited rescue package from the IMF. No lesser figure than Helmut Kohl, Boris Yeltsin's best friend (and biggest creditor) in the West, has said that further funds cannot be justified.

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SPORT

Personal best for 'Friendly Games'

Mike Rowbottom
examines the Commonwealth's triumph over the malaise of cynicism

AT THE conclusion of the last Commonwealth Games in Victoria, an Australian broadcasting journalist was overheard shouting excitedly into his microphone: "And the great news from Canada is that Australia has won the Commonwealth Games!"

If you want to look at the Games purely in terms of medals – something the Aussies seem more than happy to do as they limber up for the Sydney Olympics two years hence – then, yes, the Australians have won again. For the record it was 199 medals to England's 136.

But the greater victory is that of the Games themselves. From the low point of Edinburgh 12 years ago, when miserable weather and an African boycott threatened to drain the purpose out of a four-yearly product of one Canadian journalist's bright idea, the event has vindicated itself.

This year again, the self-styled "Friendly Games" have succeeded in bringing together highly paid, professional athletes and amateurs in much the same social and sporting mix as the London Marathon produces with elite runners and Joe Joggers.

It is a blend which works, to the benefit of those from both ends of the spectrum.

The Olympic Games, with its stringent qualification requirements, would not allow someone like Candace Blakes to contest the heptathlon. Yet this 18-year-old Belizean schoolgirl and novice to the event stayed the course, with the motherly encouragement of Britain's world No 1, Denise Lewis. These Games were a step on the



Manchester's symbol of unity, which will be used to promote the 2002 Games, illuminates Monday's closing ceremony in Kuala Lumpur

Nick Wilson/Allsport

Olympic way for such track and field athletes as Lewis, Steve Backley, Iwan Thomas and Darren Campbell; in the pool, swimmers like James Hickman and Mark Foster, of England, as well as Australia's Ian Thorpe, are headed in the same direction. Thorpe, or "Thorpedo" as he has come to be known, took four golds and is moving towards Sydney 2000 with potentially explosive effect.

While some of the athletics events were lacking quality entrants, the programme maintained its respectability through such races as the 100 metres, where Ato Boldon won in 9.88sec ahead of the quadruple Olympic silver medallist, Frankie Fredericks.

Malaysia has been embarrassed by the civil unrest which has followed the deposition of its deputy

and finance minister, Anwar Ibrahim. The suggestion by Malaysia's Prime Minister that the 2008 Olympics could be a target came on the same day that streets in central Kuala Lumpur were blocked off because of rioting by Anwar's supporters.

The volatile political situation has created an underlying tension over the last two weeks, but the Games themselves have been free of any major problems and the hosts, who finished fourth in the medals table, have revelled in them. In sporting terms, it will be a hard act to follow.

The city charged with doing that, Manchester, is conceiving its Games

commitments on a smaller scale than those which have just taken place for the first time in Asia, where the capital cost was around £300m. A total of £112m has been awarded from National Lottery funds towards the cost of new buildings. Of that, £22m will go towards a double-decker swimming facility – two 50m pools on separate stories for warm-up and competition.

The remaining £90m will go towards a 40,000-seater stadium, into which Manchester City football club are planning to move once the 2002 Games have finished.

The club's directors have agreed in principle to the relocation, although shareholders – and sup-

porters – have yet to voice their full opinion.

Manchester already has a legacy of two unsuccessful Olympic bids in the form of a velodrome, as well as having the Nynex Centre up and running to house other events.

One of these is certain to be netball – another target for England's

Tracey Neville, sister of the Manchester United defenders, Phil and Gary. Exactly how Manchester 2002 will reflect the enormous success of the introduction of team sports to the Commonwealth Games here is still being debated.

Apart from the 14 individual sports mentioned in the original bid document, there is likely to be a persuasive argument.

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League proposes show in S Africa

SUPER LEAGUE is waiting for a reply from the National Rugby League in Australia to a proposal for a World Club Championship match in South Africa next February.

Discussions have already taken place about playing the match between the British and Australian champions at Ellis Park in Johannesburg.

"We feel that something like Brisbane versus Wigan would be a big draw there," Maurice Lindsay, the managing director of Super League, said.

The Australians have already agreed in principle to a World Club Championship before the start of next season and have even said that they would be willing to play in England. But Lindsay believes that the time is right for a showpiece fixture in a neutral country.

Although last season's expanded World Club Championship, involving all Super League teams in both countries, turned into a one-sided embarrassment, one-off matches between national champions have always been marketable and competitive.

Brisbane have already figured in two such world title deciders and are favourites to win the Australian Premiership again against Canterbury in his Grand Final on Sunday.

Wigan, equally strong favourites to win the British play-offs starting next weekend, have six players in the Dream Team, selected on performances in Super League this year.

They include Robbie McCormack, the Australian hooker who is looking for another club after being offered reduced terms by Wigan for next season.

Only two players from clubs which have failed to qualify for the play-offs will be available in the play-offs starting next weekend, have six players in the Dream Team, selected on performances in Super League this year.

RUGBY LEAGUE
By DAVE HADFIELD

the play-offs are in the selection - the Sheffield Eagles prop, Dale Laughlin, and Steele Rettich, the second-row forward from the London Broncos.

Perhaps the most intriguing selection, however, is that of Iestyn Harris as stand-off, despite the fact that he has started most of his games for Leeds this season at full-back. The Great Britain coach, Andy Goodway, has sounded equivocal about the prospect of playing Harris at stand-off against New Zealand this autumn, but his unanimous selection there by the voting panel is a mark of the impact he has had when moved to the role during matches.

Two of Harris' Leeds team-mates, Brad Godden and Adrian Morley, are also in the side, making them the second-best represented club.

Wakefield Trinity and Featherstone Rovers, who play in the First Division Grand Final at Huddersfield on Saturday, are

turning into a one-sided

embarrassment, one-off matches

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and competitive.

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Only two players from clubs

which have failed to qualify for

the play-offs will be available



Life is fine out at sea off Torbay yesterday for France's Pierre Sadoc and his crew in the Melges 24 world championship

Peter Bentley

Sproul and Zuccoli find form

SAILING

By STUART ALEXANDER
in Torquay

THE FERRARIS OF the waves began their first world championship yesterday, as 33 Melges 24s lined up in Torbay for the first time since being given official status by the International Sailing Federation.

The ISAF president, Paul Henderson, visited to give the class its official blessing. But he missed what was described by one competitor as "an almost perfect start to any regatta" when the fleet went out to find 16 to 18 knots of easterly and hazy sunshine.

A difficult swell made life

tricky for the 14 nations represented, including a strong contingent from the United States, the original home of the boat. But it was the Europeans who held

sway in the first two races of the scheduled 10 in the series. The former European champion, Giorgio Zuccoli, came third and then first, while the Scotsman Kevin Sproul matched him with a first and a third-place finish.

Challenging that pair was the American Gold Cup winner from 1996, Brian Porter, who was sixth in the first race, having led before having to recover from a broken bowsprit on the final run and then a jammed

sailmaker's baffle. His second place in the second race re-

stored his confidence, however

"It was a great day with very good sailing," Zuccoli said. "The wind and waves were perfect, but with all those other boats on the start line, there could have been quite a few problems. But we were able to get away more cleanly than expected."

Porter agreed with that analysis, adding: "We have great sailing in the States, but out there the standard is top notch. Given the problems we had, we are pretty pleased with our position."

Zuccoli added: "This is going to be extremely tough. You cannot afford to take any chances on the line, you cannot afford to not be on the line, but we are flying downwind, and

that is due in no small part to our sailmaker trimmer, Duncan McDonald."

European sailors were leading in eight of the 10 classes a third of the way through a pre-Olympic regatta in Sydney Harbour - with British crews ahead in three classes. Andrew Beardsworth, Richard Sydenham and Adrian Stead led the Soling class, after three wins out of six. Ben Ainslie was ahead of Brazil's world champion, Robert Scheidt, in a reversal of their Atlanta Olympic form in the Lasers, while the brothers Andrew and Ian Budgen were ahead in the 49er skiffs, which make their Olympic debut in two years' time.

"We didn't expect to do so well," Andy Budgen admitted after their third win out of six.

France's Faustine Merret

was the women's Mistral sail-

board leader after five races,

ahead of Germany's Amelie Lux and her fellow Frenchwoman, Justine Gardinaud.

Frederik Loof of Sweden led

the Fins, Nicol Birkner and

Whike Bille of Germany led

the women's 470, Carolyn Brouwer

of the Netherlands was the Europe class leader while the Austrians, Andreas Hagara and Wolfgang Moser, led the Tornado catamarans. The other class leaders were Argentina's Javier Conte and Juan de la Fuente in the men's 470 and New Zealand's Aaron McInnes in the men's Mistral.

The three-day eventer, Katie Parker, daughter of the Olympic gold medallist Bridget Parker, was in hospital yesterday with bad injuries after a fall at Gatcombe on Sunday. Doctors said she was "stable" and were hoping that she could leave intensive care today.

Wasim makes Test U-turn

CRICKET

WASIM AKRAM has reversed his decision he made last week to retire over charges of match-fixing and will be available for the forthcoming Australian tour of Pakistan.

Wasim, who played his last game for Lancashire on Sunday, declared himself available for his country despite last week's announcement that he is retiring in order to clear his name in the betting scandal which is currently engulfing the game in Pakistan.

An interim report released by the Pakistan Cricket Board two weeks ago had recommended that Wasim Akram, Salim Malik and Ijaz Ahmad, should not be selected until the investigations were completed. It said all three were prime suspects in an investigation which is being carried out by a Lahore judge.

The chairman of selectors,

very, very quickly," Taylor said. "I'd like to see the game taking the spotlight instead."

The bribery issue first arose four years ago when three Australians accused Pakistan players of offering them bribes to play poorly. The players were all cleared but the issue resurfaced this month when the Pakistani Cricket Board said that three players - Salim Malik, Wasim and Ijaz Ahmed - were prime suspects in an investigation into match-fixing.

An interim report recommended they should not be selected until the probe was completed, but Taylor said their presence was not an issue for the tourists. "Whatever their team comprises it's going to be a good side," Taylor said.

Paul Prichard has resigned as Essex captain after a season in which the county finished bot-

tom of the Championship for the second time in their history. The English vice-captain, Nasser Hussain, will succeed him.

The Worcestershire captain, Tom Moody, has hinted that he may bring down the curtain on his county career at the end of next season. Moody has signed a one-year contract but a source close to the county said: "If I was a betting man I wouldn't put money on him coming back to England to play after 1999."

The Sussex captain, Chris Adams, is ready to commit himself to the county for the rest of his career. The 22-year-old batsman has opened talks with the club about extending his current three-year contract, which runs until 2000.

Sussex will also offer Australian Test all-rounder Michael Bevan a two-year extension to his current contract.

SPORTS LETTERS

Post letters to Sports Desk and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2894 or e-mail to sports@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Boring, boring England

Sir: Your recent correspondents are right in drawing attention to the joylessness of life in Britain (Dull Brummie, 5 Sept), a fact which has recently been amply demonstrated by the England cricket team.

The Test match at Headington was hailed by the likes of Geoffrey Boycott as an achievement on a par with the Battle of Britain but, for the average spectator, the painful accumulation of runs, mostly through pruds, pokes and squirts to some point backward of square, was about as entertaining as root canal work. At The Oval, by contrast, we saw a side which came on to the front foot and took the game to the opposition with grace, flair and fluency; the only problem was, it wasn't England. The idea that sport, or life, might be intrinsically pleasurable is, quite literally,

foreign to us. Our aim is not to lose, a depressingly negative attitude. It may seem simplistic to say so, but I'm sure much of the blame for this must lie with our dismal climate. Up here in "Boycott country" we have just endured three months of summer containing one-and-a-half days worthy of the description. Is it surprising so many of us feel embattled?

PETER MCADIE
North Yorkshire

Cheaper thrills

Sir: Your correspondent, Ken Jones, stated his belief that there will be no backlash against football clubs who sell out. I am watching Stevenage and enjoying every minute.

MICHAEL COYLE
London

Thor point

Sir: Would you like a laugh? You would. OK then. I am a pagan (cue widespread

ridicule) and my eye was caught by a sentence in your article on Mark McGwire on 5 September: "Even Thor would be a pygmy in comparison."

Really? I wouldn't go so far as to say I was offended by the unfaltering reference to one of my gods in relation to a chemically enhanced beefcake, I'm used to it by now. I would not even bother writing this letter if I thought I could look forward to a sentence in your paper along the lines of: "Bradman, Ruth, Pele or Nurmi possessed powers which make Allah seem a pygmy in comparison. Of course, no such sentence would get by the most junior sub-editor, would it? Justifiably so."

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levar: "I bow to no one in admiration for Peter. He's the ultimate. He's a bit of a community man. He set a card to which we all as he was a great colleague who was privileged to work him."

However, then he added obviously some people find him the easiest person to work with."

Asked for his reaction to its autobiography, O'Sullivan responded: "I haven't read it yet. I am in a post-contract position. I hope the book well, that's all."

Another revelation in Wil's autobiography concerns a relationship with Clive Henry, the new Wales coach. As Welsh rugby folk are often heard to mutter these days, it never rains but it hoses down.

Eric Hughes, the St Helens football manager, made it abundantly clear yesterday that Sullivan would be expected back in 13-man mode in good time for this season's Challenge Cup campaign, which begins in February. That would rule the 29-

Sullivan will inspire Cardiff but not Wales

FIRST THIE good news. Anthony Sullivan, the record-breaking Super League wing from St Helens, is well on the way to finalising a switch to the 15-man code with Cardiff this winter. And the bad news? His return to the land of his father, the great Clive Sullivan, will be of no conceivable use to Graham Henry, the new Wales coach. As Welsh rugby folk are often heard to mutter these days, it never rains but it hoses down.

Given that Iestyn Harris, the astonishingly versatile million-pound property from Leeds, is tied hand, foot and finger to his sporting career in Yorkshire, the Welsh Rugby Union hierarchy may well find themselves denied access to either of their preferred league reinforcements. Rather like

England, who briefly flirted with the idea of transforming Gary Connolly into a Twickenham hero, Wales are finding the logistics of cross-code co-existence too complicated for words.

Henry's most pressing personnel problems surround the tight five of the scrum, but a coach of his stature would do for the chance to run Harris at full-back and Sullivan on the left wing. Iestyn Evans' retirement from international rugby has left the Welsh without a natural wide finisher - Gareth Thomas and Dafydd James are not quite quick enough while Gareth Wyatt is worryingly short of muscle - and the No 15 shirt has not been filled with

complete confidence since Paul Thorburn bowed out seven years ago.

"We understand Anthony's wanting to go to Cardiff where his father started his own career, and will listen sympathetically to his request," said Hughes, adding that as a consummate left-wing, Sullivan would find it easier than most to adapt to the unique positional demands of the 15-man game. "But we would insist on his not missing any games for Saints. If he does agree a move to Cardiff, we would like him to extend his contract with us."

Gareth Davies, the Cardiff chief executive, confirmed his club's interest in Sullivan's services, which were only intensi-

fied by the player's landmark achievement in putting five tries, a Super League record, past London Broncos last Friday night. "He's very keen to give union a crack and we'd certainly like to think he will be playing here at some stage," Davies said. "He is a consummate professional and because of that professionalism and the great relationship he has with his club, St Helens are happy to consider the union option."

Few Welsh Rugby Union committee men will be remotely amused by the obvious irony surrounding Cardiff's impending coup. The Arms Park club's relationship with their governing body has collapsed to such a degree that they are

not participating in any officially sanctioned competitions and the sight of Sullivan playing in a series of rebel games against the leading English clubs could be one insult too many for the purple-faced traditionalists.

The Scots, meanwhile, are fast piecing together a team of specialist talent. Unfortunately for them, it is a coaching team rather than a playing XV. John Rutherford, for many people's money the most accomplished European outside-half of his generation, will form one third of a three-man support unit for Jim Telfer, the head coach.

Rutherford, capped 42 times between 1979 and 1987, is joined by Ian McGeechan, the three-

time Lions coach and current director of rugby at Northampton, and Hugh Campbell, who steps up from forward duties with Scotland A. Further down the line, there are appointments for David Leslie, the former international flanker, and Richie Dixon, who was deposed as national coach last January. They take over the Under-21s and Under-19s respectively.

The winger Jason Little scored a record-equalling four tries in the "Wallabies'" 74-6 thrashing of Tonga during the second round of the Pacific World Cup qualifying tournament.

The 12-trv win virtually guarantees Australia will finish on top of the four-nation Pacific

tournament and qualify for the World Cup's Pool E based in Ireland.

The only way the Australians will not top the tournament is if Samoa score more tries on the way to beating them in the final round in Brisbane on Saturday. But on both teams' current record, the Samoans would need a miracle.

Australia led Tonga 41-0 at half-time and their victory was only two points short of equalling their all-time record win, a 76-0 thrashing of England earlier this year.

Little's four tries matched the records of Greg Cornelsen against New Zealand in 1978 and David Campese against the United States in 1983.

Blossoming career of racer Rydell

The new touring car champion was fined for attacking a rival, but he is far more at home using flower power. By Nick Phillips

RICKARD RYDELL took the British Touring Car Championship crown in a tense season in which he won five races, led the points' table almost throughout, picked up a hefty fine and a severe reprimand for assaulting his closest rival, and emphatically answered those who questioned his toughness under pressure.

However the Swede, who turned 31 yesterday, is far from the crass petrolhead you might take him for on those bare facts. His boss is Roger Silman of TWR Racing, the British firm which runs the Volvo BTCC programme as well as the Arrows Grand Prix team. Silman says: "If you get an intelligent driver with natural ability, then you've got something exceptional. Rickard's very intelligent and that always makes the difference in the end."

The assault in question was in effect just a bit of grabbing, backed by angry words, but even that was out of character for Rydell, who is one of the quiet souls in the championship, and even has a couple of tulips painted on his crash helmet.



Rydell: Natural ability

The tulips are a clue to the very different occupation he almost went into full-time on leaving school - accountant in a flower business in his native Stockholm. The business is the family firm AB Rydell, which grows tulips and hyacinths and distributes them along with other imported blooms around Stockholm. Right through his increasingly successful driving career, Rickard has returned to help with the number-crunching in the firm in quiet moments. Those are now few and far between and Rydell also has his own growing family - he and wife Ulrika have three children.

Rydell had been a very successful kart racer in Sweden in his teens, but had no plans to move into car racing until his career was taken in hand by Piko Troberg, a key figure in Swedish motorsport. Troberg ran Rydell in Formula 3 in Sweden and then arranged for him to drive in the far more competitive F3 championship in Britain. He had some success, but never found the big breaks and soon was off to Japan to race in that country's professional F3 series. Again he was very successful, winning plenty of races including, in 1992, the prestigious Macau Grand Prix which is held on a very difficult and dangerous street circuit. The drivers he beat then included his team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve, and David Coulthard.

While Villeneuve and Coulthard moved up to Formula One, Rydell's career took a different path and he moved into the BTCC with Volvo in 1994, to drive the eccentric 850 estate.

Now he has won the BTCC and, although he's pleased, characteristically he is too logical to be getting worked up. He puts this season's success down to practical improvements on the Volvo S40 he drives and in the team itself.

He has not approached this season any differently to any other, and he does not even believe that he has been driving any better. "I think I am the same driver I was 10 years ago," he says. "I don't really

change much. Of course, with a bit more experience in the team, everyone works better together. It works quite well now between the designer, my engineer and myself. I think we're working more efficiently than we did a year or two years ago."

Rydell is well respected by his rivals. Tim Harvey, the 1992 champion, who was Rydell's team-mate at Volvo in 1995 again in 1996. He's aware that back-to-back wins are rare but thinks that he, TWR and Volvo can buck the trend. "Recently the winners have been easily the best at the end of the season. We know that we have got one of the best cars now, but not the best, so we know that we will have to work very hard over the winter. I think we can do it."

After that initial learning year for both team and driver in '94, Rydell became one of the men to beat in the series. He has finished in the top four in the points' table at the end of each of the last three seasons.

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FORM VERDICT

2.10 TACTIC 2.40 Done Well 3.10 Peggy Gordon 3.40 Le Denstan 4.10 Arctic Fox 4.40 Sanderson

GOING: Good (Good to firm in places on hundur course).

■ R/HAND: Course with sharp turns, but he cannot afford a slow start as on his last nursery attempt. Autocar may be better at 1m and it is impossible to know how Blue Star will be on 1st, so the vote goes to PRIDEWAY, who has had nursery form here, in the hope it will take to Birkdale.

■ LEADING TRAINERS: Sir M. Stobart 20-75 (26.7%), A. Bell 17-18 (16.4%), G. H. Smith 16-17 (16.4%), J. Egan 15-16 (15.2%), N. Denstan 15-16 (12.5%), J. Carroll 15-16 (10.5%), O. Holland 10-15 (8.5%), J. Carroll 8-15 (10.5%).

■ FAVOURITES: 150-381 (38.4%).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Prideway (32.0), Top Of The Form (recorded, 45.0).

PERTH

HYPERTON

2.10 Tactic 2.40 Done Well 3.10 Peggy Gordon 3.40 Le Denstan 4.10 Arctic Fox 4.40 Sanderson

GOING: Good (Good to firm in places on hundur course).

■ R/HAND: Hard course with sharp turns, Run-in 200m.

■ COURSE: In Scone Palace Park, 4m N of town on A83. Buses from town. Train from Dundee to Scone, then bus to course. 22-car park in Phoenix area including max 4x4s, rest free.

■ LEADING TRAINERS: M. Hammond 24-21 (60.0%), Mrs M. Raveley 15-19 (22.5%), P. Monteith 17-17 (22.5%), L. Lungo 8-4 (16.7%).

■ LEADING JOCKEYS: P. Evans 25-76 (32.9%), A. Dobbin 20-87 (28.9%), N. H. O'Brien 8-7 (27.0%), D. Marnie 8-8 (2.2%), A. Garth 21-20 (2.2%).

■ FAVOURITES: 137-321 (38.4%).

■ LONG DISTANCE RUNNER: Jesters (2.0) travels 362 miles.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Peat Line (recorded, 24.0).

FORM VERDICT

2.10 BALLATHIE HOUSE HOTEL NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 3m

1. FIVE COPPER JEWEL (225) (D) J. Jones 5 10 10. R. McGehee 2 2

2. 550P HAND OF STRAW (128) (D) W. McRae 7 10 10. P. McCormick 2 2

3. AUTO-JEEPERS (177) (D) W. McRae 7 10 10. C. McCormick 2 2

4. 550P PERSONAL TICK (154) (D) M. Jones 5 10 10. B. Robbie 2 2

5. 550P MARCHANT (111) (D) Mrs J. Stover 9 11 11. J. Stover 2 2

6. 550P WILDRUM (111) (D) Mrs J. Stover 9 11 11. J. Stover 2 2

7. 550P LE DENSTAN (11) (D) Mrs J. Stover 9 11 11. J. Stover 2 2

8. 550P BITACRACK (120) (D) J. Jones 8 10 10. P. McCormick 2 2

9. 550P HAMMOND (119) (D) Mrs J. Stover 9 11 11. J. Stover 2 2

10. 550P FEEL A LOT (117) (D) Mrs J. Stover 9 11 11. J. Stover 2 2

11. 550P TACTIC (12) (D) J. Jones 8 10 10. P. McCormick 2 2

- declared -

MINIMUM WEIGHT: 11kg. True weight: 11kg. Weight Breakdown: 8kg.

BETTING: 11-4 Any Part, 7-2 Le Denstan, 5-1 Master Bester, 5-1 Wedcup, 7-1 Classic Contact, 6-1 Sainsbury Beach, 7-1 Johns The Boy, 16-1 Blazefield.

FORM VERDICT

Tony Martin has been a trainer to follow here this season, with Falcone Melody three times and NOT POINT! successfully.

He has trained most of the horses to his stablemates, and is on the upgrade and capable of doing his big weight at the expense of Master Bester.

FORM VERDICT

It is difficult to compare the form of the British and Irish runners. Ireland had a runaway handicap hurdle winner in Wicklow Way here last month, and it may be that HEAD CHAPLAIN has been underestimated, too. Certainly, his home-trained mares seem of limited ability, and Peggy Gordon, moreover, has been an inadequate stamina test unless plenty of use is made of her.

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Jackson big on pride and passion

Huddersfield old boy rekindles spirit as Terriers find their bite. By Guy Hodgson

A QUIZ question, albeit of the trick variety, which First Division manager also won a championship medal for playing last season? The answer is Peter Jackson, who appeared in enough matches for Halifax Town last campaign to gain a GM Vauxhall Conference going.

If your reaction is "why?" then it echoes the predominant one that burtled round Huddersfield when Jackson was appointed manager of the town's football team 11 months ago. Even those who did know quickly added: "Why?"

There is no incredulity now, or if there is it is the delighted type. When Jackson walked through the doors of the McAlpine Stadium last October, Huddersfield were bottom of the First Division, having gained just four points from 15 matches. Even Manchester City were above them.

Now the club head the First for the first time in 26 years. City are so-so in the Second and the only questions concerning Jackson, who resuscitated Huddersfield to 16th last season, are those that ask what he is doing right. It is a chorus that will not quieten if his side convert a 1-1 first leg draw with Everton into a Wethornton Cup second round victory at Goodison tonight.

It has been a turn-around as drastic as the difference between their creaking old home at Leeds Road and the futuristic

McAlpine Stadium. As to why, the framed Huddersfield colours in Jackson's office bear the words "Be proud to wear this shirt" gives a clue.

Jackson, a whole-hearted defender who played 150 games for Town in the early 1990s and was captain of the Bradford City team on the dreadful day of the fire 13 years ago, admits to shedding a tear when he was offered the chance to manage Huddersfield, and places huge emphasis on the old-fashioned virtues of spirit and hard work.

"It's a such a famous old shirt, blue and white stripes, and when I was captain here I used to look forward to putting it on," he said. "That's what I wanted to install in the players. There's no secret to what the fans want to see - pride and passion."

After five successive League victories and only two defeats this season, that has been addressed. Backbone was transplanted with the signing of the former Everton captain Barry Horne while new avenues of attack have been opened by purchasing Ben Thornley, the former Manchester United winger, who snatched the injury-time winner against Wolves on Saturday.

"The critics said we would be off the top of the First Division after 24 hours, but we are still there after two weeks," Jackson said, "and long may it continue."

"We have waited 26 years to

be as high as this so I want the fans and everyone connected with the club to enjoy it. It's important to enjoy the good times. We are getting results because of sheer hard work and we're sitting on top of the table because we deserve to be there."

Whether they will remain there in the near future is open to conjecture, because tonight is the first of three away games that could define their destiny. Win those and supporters will add belief to delighted surprise.

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Peter Jackson (left), the Huddersfield manager, and major buy Ben Thornley are happy to be heading the Nationwide

Varley Picture Agency

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Corry, maybe, but at a time when media moguls can buy football tradition for the price of £22m, it is refreshing, nonetheless.

No matter what happens tonight, you cannot help but feel Jackson and Huddersfield are worthy of whatever success comes their way. Even a GM Vauxhall Conference medal...

FIRST DIVISION						
	G	P	W	D	L	F
Huddersfield	6	1	2	2	10	18
Sheffield United	5	1	2	2	12	17
Birmingham	5	1	3	2	12	16
Watford	5	0	1	4	12	15
Sheffield Wednesday	4	2	3	15	16	14
Nottingham Forest	4	2	3	15	16	14
Bolton	3	0	18	13	13	13
West Brom	4	1	3	17	14	13
Leeds	3	1	3	12	16	13
Portsmouth	3	1	3	12	16	13
Barnsley	3	0	18	12	10	12
Derby	3	0	18	12	10	12
Stockport	2	2	4	10	12	10
Sunderland	2	2	5	13	20	8
Crewe	2	2	4	12	14	8
Blackburn Rovers	2	1	5	10	17	8
C Palace	2	1	5	10	17	8
Port Vale	2	1	5	14	7	7
Sheffield Utd	1	3	5	9	11	6
QPR	1	3	5	9	11	6
Heritor City	1	3	4	9	11	20
Tranmere	1	4	3	4	12	4

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After Everton, the Terriers travel to the Reebok Stadium for what Jackson describes as potentially the most difficult trip of the season against Bolton and, next Tuesday, they meet Stockport County at Edgeley Park - a fixture and a 3-0 defeat that effectively ended Brian Horton's spell in charge last season.

Joe Royle and Bruce Rioch were among the names being touted as Horton's replacement at the time, but instead

Huddersfield remembered a 36-year-old former player and called Jackson for a Sunday morning meeting. "I had all the emotions," he said. "I was playing for Halifax on the Saturday and how I got through that game I'll never know, because my mind was going. What questions are they going to ask? What am I going to say?"

"Some ex-internationals or managers with 20 years' experience don't get interviews for

a job like this, never mind get appointed, so for a person who was not really known outside Yorkshire it was fantastic. The club gambled on me."

To say Huddersfield collected their winnings is an understatement, and last March Jackson signed a new two-year contract that confirmed his place at the McAlpine. "I love this club," he said. "When I first walked through the doors of the old stadium I don't know what it was but I had the feeling this

is for me". The day that love disappears will be the day I lose my job."

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Gun law for Romanian players

ROMANIA

RISING VIOLENCE amongst Romanian fans has spawned a new phenomenon in the country's post-communist sport: the gun-carrying footballer.

No longer content to confine their rage to smashing buses and shop windows or setting fire to stadium seats, supporters have turned their fury towards the players, who have reacted in kind. Carrying a firearm is now viewed almost as a standard precaution by some celebrated names.

"Our players now bring pistols to training sessions and matches because they are afraid of unpredictable behaviour by fans," the newspaper Pro Sport wrote recently.

In the Black Sea port of Constanta, after the local side were beaten 1-0 by National Bucharest, a frenzied fan began punching National's Stelian Carabas near the dressing-room. The assault came to an abrupt end when his teammate, Gheorghe Butoiu, thrust a 9mm pistol into the attacker's face.

"I had the gun with me because I was sure that things would get worse," Butoiu said. "Unfortunately, I was right."

National Bucharest's goalkeeper Cristian Munteanu

admitted to owning a Browning pistol, and said several of his team-mates had also bought weapons.

Another goalkeeper Bogdan Leontiu, newly promoted to the national squad, said he acquired a gun when his team, Rapid Bucharest, were having a tough time in the league two years ago. "I was afraid sometimes when angry supporters would approach me on the street and ask why we were doing so badly," he said.

Some players said the biggest threat came not from fans disgruntled at a club's poor form, but from those convinced that top players returning from lucrative spells abroad were easy targets for extorting money. "Refusing to give money could become dangerous," the national team player Constantin Galea, of the Spanish club Espanyol, said. "When you refuse, frustrated supporters spit at you and hurl abuse."

BULGARIA

THE COACH who will try to outwit Glenn Hoddle when Bulgaria visit England for a European Championship qualifier next month has, it transpires, a reputation for aggressive and temperamental behaviour.

Dimitar Dimitrov, who

replaced Hristo Bonev following Bulgaria's 3-0 home defeat to Sweden earlier this month, has been disciplined twice by UEFA for incidents in Champions League qualifying matches.

Dimitrov, who began the season in charge of the Bulgarian champions, Litex Lovech, was suspended for one game when he went on to the pitch during the game to congratulate his players after they scored a goal at home to Helsingborg in July. He received another one-match ban a week later in Sweden, when he shouted abusive

comments from the stands during the return leg. UEFA also fined him heavily.

Dimitrov, regarded as one of Bulgaria's most talented but controversial coaches, took a fashion show to Nefochimik Bourgas to second place in the league before his winning season with Litex Lovech. He sold last week that he intended to continue his predecessor's policy of rejuvenating the team - starting with the Euro 2000 game at Wembley on October 10.

"As Bonev's assistant I accepted the idea for gradual rejuvenation of the squad, and I plan to keep on following it," Dimitrov said. "Our main goal should be to form an efficient team which will start the 2002 World Cup qualifiers successfully." The defeat to Poland marked his debut as a national team assistant coach.

In last weekend's Bulgarian league programme, Slavia Sofia crushed Dohrutzia Dobrich 6-2 - and Slavia's coach, Stoyan Kotsev, singled out his striker Ivo Trenchev as a man who could help turn around the fortunes of Bulgaria's struggling national team.

Trenchev could prove to be very useful in the upcoming matches against England and Sweden. Dimitrov should gain an eye on him," Kotsev said.

The club faces various possible sanctions, including disqualification, at this week's meeting. Last week the league ordered Spartak to play their next match at a neutral ground.

"I don't think Spartak will play any more home matches this season," Lipovci said. "The club was already in big trouble, with all sorts of financial difficulties. And now this."

RUSSIA

THE RUSSIAN First Division club Spartak Nalchik may face a ban from the league at a disciplinary hearing into an incident last week when an enraged fan broke a referee's nose with a mobile phone.

Lev Lipovci, the competition director for the Russian league, said on Monday that officials would review last Wednesday's 1-1 draw between Spartak and Arsenal Tula in Nalchik, the capital of the ethnic southern region of Kabardino-Balkaria.

The referee Nikolai Ivanov said that, as he walked down the tunnel after the match, which increased Spartak's relegation worries, he was assaulted by a fan wielding a telephone and sustained serious injuries, including a broken nose. He also reported incidents during the game, including one in which a linesman was punched by a fan who ran on to the pitch.

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BRAZIL

BRAZIL'S NATIONAL team begin a new era tonight with a friendly against Yugoslavia in São Luis. It will be their first match since losing the World Cup final to France in July.

The new coach, Vanderlei Luxemburgo, has called up only three members of the France '98 squad: the forwards Denilson and Rivaldo and the full-back Cafu. He has given a first chance to some of Brazil's most promising players, like the Vasco da Gama left-back Felipe, the Recife midfielder Jackson and the Corinthians centre-half Vampeta.

Luxemburgo has also summoned some more experienced players who were overlooked by his predecessor, Mario Zagallo. They include the International goalkeeper Andre, the veteran striker Müller, plus Marinho, Carioca from Corinthians, the joint top scorer in the Brazilian league.

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AS LIVERPOOL and Manchester United prepared to meet at Anfield tomorrow night, both clubs were trying to play down the ramifications of Alex Ferguson's "big time Charlie" insult to Paul Ince, his former player.

Leicester, too, was unwilling to react to Ferguson's attack, in which he also branded the England midfielder as a bully and warned his side to play like men and stand up to the Liverpool skipper.

Ince is only 50-50 to play in the match as he needs to overcome a knee problem that has kept him out of the last two Liverpool fixtures. Striker Karlheinz Riedle fit again after a groin problem and has given Evans and Gerard Houllier, Liverpool's co-manager, the problem of which pairing to play from the German, Michael Owen and Robbie Fowler. The likelihood is that

Fowler will be on the substitutes' bench.

United's own injury problems worsened yesterday with Ronny Johnsen struggling to overcome the ankle injury which has caused him to miss United's last two games. He is unlikely to be available.

David May and Teddy Sheringham, who both have knee problems, are also losing the battle to be fit.

Meanwhile, Ferguson is unmoved by Aston Villa's intention to prise Andy Cole away from Old Trafford. "I have nothing to report on Andy Cole," he said. "It is not an issue."

United have been charged by the Football Association following the failure of defender Wes Brown to report for international duty with England Under-18 squad.

Brown had been selected by Howard Wilkinson to take part in the Uefa Under-18 Championship game in Cyprus in July but did not attend.

United have been charged under the FA rule which obliges clubs to provide medical reports for players deemed unfit to report for international duty. The club have 14 days to respond to the charge and to request a hearing.

WEEKEND POOLS FORECAST

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

Brilliant Barry is top of the form

He is younger than Michael Owen and has Villa Park enthralled. By Phil Shaw

TO PARAPHRASE a well-known advertising slogan featuring Eric Cantona, 1996 and all that: 1998 is a great year for Aston Villa - Gareth Barry was born.

Villa go into Saturday's top-of-the-table collision at home to Derby County occupying the top spot in which they last finished 17 years ago, when Barry was sucking dummies rather than selling them to forwards. Their fine start has been based on defensive meanness - just one goal given up in six Premiership games - and the contribution of their fresh-faced No 15 has been as awesome as it was unexpected.

Barry did not become a full-time professional until February, having come to the club only the previous summer. But already, perhaps prematurely after fewer than 10 senior appearances, he has drawn comparisons with the young Bobby Moore. Time will tell, yet the belief that Villa have unearthed pure gold in claret and blue owes more to his extraordinary composure than the coincidence of colours.

On Friday Villa will attend a tribunal which will decide how much, if anything, they must pay Brighton & Hove Albion for plucking him from their centre of excellence at the age of 16. A figure of £3,500, to cover coaching expenses, has been mentioned. If John Gregory were ordered to pay £3,500, he would be advised to cough up.

The scout who delivered Barry to Villa was Brian Jones. Having spotted him playing in a Sussex schools match and recommended him to Brian Little, Jones now regards him as his best discovery since Gordon Cowans. Arsenal and Chelsea also had designs on him, although at one time he was tempted to pursue a career in rugby or cricket.

Gregory, then two months

into the manager's job, gave him his debut against the new champions, Arsenal, on last season's final day. Barry hardly gave Nicolas Anelka a kick in a 1-0 win. However, when Villa paid £3m for David Unsworth to replace Steve Staunton on the left of the back three, the former midfielder looked set for another year out of the public gaze.

Now the guitar-strumming Gregory could be forgiven for bursting into an impromptu rendition of "Here's to you, Mrs Unsworth". For it was her insistence that her husband find a club in the North-west that led to Barry receiving his opportunity on the opening day of the new campaign.

He took it with both feet, coping with the heat, the clamour of the Everton crowd and Duncan Ferguson as if he was enjoying a beach game back in his home town of Hastings. "The lad had no fear or apprehension at all," Gregory purred. "He produced one cushioned header to a team-mate, under pressure, that made me turn to Steve Harrison (Villa's coach) in disbelief."

One of Glenn Hoddle's back-room staff, Peter Taylor, was equally impressed. Barry, who stands a quarter of an inch under 6ft, is an England Under-18 cap and seems certain to follow his fellow Villa defender, Ricardo Scimeca, into the Under-21s.

To put his promise into perspective: Scimeca, who captained his country at the latter level, is rated a good prospect. Barry has a staggering six years on him, not to mention being 14 months younger than Michael Owen.

Villa-watchers have waited for a hint of fallibility. Alan Shearer did not manage to expose one. Nor did Wimbledon's towering strikeforce. And he



Gareth Barry, the 17-year-old Aston Villa defender, shows his poise and confidence on the ball

Alisport

was coolness itself at Leeds, killing one long pass on his chest in the penalty area and feinting past Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink with a drop of the shoulder before launching a counter-attack with the outside of the foot.

That cameo moved Gregory to describe Barry as "a freak", and to admit there were times when he wished he would belt the ball into Row Z. "I suppose one day he'll get caught being too clever and it'll cost us a goal, but we're not going to try to change him," he said. "It's best not to tamper with talent like that."

Nor to hurt it either, as his manager is only too aware. "Gareth can be anybody he wants, but you would think there will come a time at such a tender age when he dips and has to come out of the action.

It's down to us how we use him, how we look after him after matches and to make sure we don't drag the gills out of him all week in training.

"He has coped with it all so far. He's a quick learner and has the advantage of being a down-to-earth kid but I've seen so many players destroyed by putting them on a pedestal. They can be on top of the world at 17 and disappear off the face of the earth by 19. Still, he's been the biggest bonus of my time here and if he plays 30 games this season it'll be phenomenal."

Strikers win matches, Gregory is fond of saying, whereas defenders win championships. Villa have won nothing yet, but with Barry maturing rapidly alongside Gareth Southgate and Ugo Ehiogu, they are unlikely to fail for want of a solid foundation.

Riseth deal signals change

THE CELTIC chairman, Ferguson McCann, promised further signings after the Scottish champions paraded their latest recruit, the Norwegian international Vidar Riseth, at Parkhead yesterday.

"There is no lack of activity, but it is important that we are selective," McCann said, responding to recent criticism by supporters disappointed that he had failed to strengthen the team during the summer. "There is no question of holding back any funding for our coach, Jozef Venglos.

Riseth, who has 10 caps, played in two of the games for Norway during the World Cup finals but I knew it was time for me to move on to a bigger club.

"It was important for me to come to a club which can win things and I hope I can help Celtic to win the Scottish championship."

The left-side midfielder moved to Linn in 1996 after a short spell with Luton in England. Before that he was with the Norwegian side Rosenborg Trondheim.

Aberdeen have admitted their disappointment after a transfer tribunal ruled Newcastle must pay them £650,000 for Stephen Glass.

The Dons wanted £1m for the Scotland under-21 and B international midfielder, while Newcastle offered only £100,000. Aberdeen's chairman Stewart Milne said: "We put forward what we believed was an extremely strong case, but unfortunately the panel decided on a figure somewhere in the middle of what the two clubs were after. While we feel we should be receiving more for a player of the calibre of Stephen, we obviously have no option but to abide by the tribunal's finding."

Inter's Baggio in lucky escape

ROBERTO BAGGIO has escaped unhurt after an accident in which his car collided with a truck. The incident occurred on Monday afternoon, when the internazionale and Italy player was driving to his home near Pavia in northern Italy. Police said that Baggio's Mercedes was hit by a truck which, apparently out of control, had crossed into his lane.

The president of the Italian Olympic committee (Coni) was questioned for three hours by a government enquiry in Rome yesterday over allegations relating to drugs tests in football.

Mario Pescante faced the commission of enquiry after revelations that only a fraction of Italian footballers' urine samples were tested for steroids and that test records were destroyed after two months.

Giorgio Santilli, who on Monday was sacked by Coni as president of the Italian Sporting Doctors' Federation, which runs the test laboratory at the centre of the scandal, will face the commission next.

He will be followed by the head of the Italian football fed-

eration, Luciano Nizzola, in the enquiry which has been ordered by Italy's deputy prime minister, Walter Veltroni.

The former Leeds striker Tony Yeooh, now 32, has rejected an appeal from Ghana to make an international comeback. A spokesman for Yeooh's present club, Hamburg, said: "Because of his age and a lot of problems with injuries, Anthony Yeooh retired from the national team a few years ago. His situation still hasn't changed."

France intends to honour its female football supporters when the national side returns to the scene of their World Cup triumph next month. The French football federation is laying on a special night of celebration at the Stade de France on 14 October when France play a Euro 2000 qualifier against Andorra.

A rose will be given to every woman who attends the match. Female fans can pay a reduced price of 50 francs (£5.20) for a special 9,000-capacity women-only stand, where they will be given other gifts by the team's sponsors. In addition, all the ball-gatherers will be girls.

Euro 2000's worries about traffic jams

TRAFFIC JAMS are the main problem facing the Euro 2000 championship in Belgium and the Netherlands, Alain Courtois, the tournament director, said yesterday.

"Everybody's talking about security and tickets, but what's keeping me busy more is the mobility problem," Courtois told *Het Nieuwsblad* newspaper.

"How are people going to reach and leave the stadium? How do we make sure that it isn't a nuisance for people? We need good public transport between both countries to avoid traffic jams. This will be the [main] problem of Euro 2000," he said.

Courtois dismissed reports that construction works in Euro 2000 stadiums were behind schedule. Preparations for the finals have recently been attacked in the Dutch and Belgian media. The governing body of European football, Uefa, denied a report it had threatened to take the finals away from the Belgian and Dutch co-hosts.

"I'm regularly in contact with Uefa. Never did I hear any criticism or warnings," Courtois said. He added that a number of areas - including security and ticket distribution - had not yet been finalised. The plans will be announced at a news conference in Rotterdam on 27 October.

Hammers downplay Juve link

BY NICK HARRIS

ALESSANDRO DEL PIERO will play for West Ham when John Hartson is unfit and the World Cup-winning midfielder, Zinedine Zidane, will stand by to replace Eyal Berkovic should the Israeli playmaker pull a muscle. That, at least, seemed the tantalising scenario yesterday when it was announced that the Hammers are considering some kind of partnership scheme with Juventus.

The truth of the matter, unfortunately, is somewhat more mundane. Harry Redknapp, the West Ham manager, travelled to Rome on a scouting

and buy top players from Juventus, when they become available. "But nothing has yet developed," and Didier Deschamps and Edgar Davids will just have to wait a while longer for their chance at Upton Park.

At the less glamorous end of the London transfer market, Brentford have signed the defender Hermann Freidrasson from Crystal Palace, the former club of their chairman and Under-21 international, Tony Folan, for £100,000.

The Bury manager, Neil Warnock, has warned off the Premiership strugglers Sheffield Wednesday by putting a £500,000 move from Bolton. The Scottish international striker is fit again, after an Achilles tendon operation put him out of contention for the World Cup.

Sign the striker Ashley Ward from his old club Barnsley or Leicester City.

Wigan wants Ward to lead his attack at Hillsborough - but Leicester are also keen on the experienced forward as a partner for Emile Heskey.

Bradford City are to give John McGinlay a free transfer - less than a year after his £55,000 move from Bolton. The Scottish international striker is fit again, after an Achilles tendon operation put him out of contention for the World Cup.

The Wednesday manager, Danny Wilson, is also trying to

Federation forces Festina out of world championships

THE FESTINA cycling team, thrown out of the Tour de France amid doping allegations, will miss next month's world championships after the French Cycling Federation yesterday decided to adjourn disciplinary procedures against them.

Daniel Baal, the FFC's president, announced the decision at a Paris press conference and explained that the Federation had opted for a delay because judicial authorities had forced their hand.

"Because the judicial authorities have not authorised the FFC to use the verbal depositions of those charged, either as civil parties or merely as witnesses, the FFC believes it cannot exercise its disciplinary power."

"For these reasons, it is adjourning the said procedures," Baal explained. He added that the procedure remained open and that, because the riders still

stood to receive disciplinary measures from the International Cycling Union, "they will not be able to be selected for the world championship".

The German sprinter Marcel Wüst struck again in the 17th stage of the Tour of Spain yesterday from Burgos to Leon.

Wüst's fast finish took him clear of Spain's Angel Edo with the Russian Sergei Smetanin third in a mass sprint. But he avenged 51.137kph at Zaragoza to set the fastest average for a road race stage in any of the three major tours.

Yesterday, however, headwinds slowed times in the 188.5km stage and nothing disturbed the overall lead of Spain's Abraham Olano, who is still 22 seconds clear of Laurent Jalabert of France.

Freddy Nirowood, of the United States, yesterday stopped the Japanese challenger Koji Matsumoto, who won his 10th round in their scheduled World Cup, to claim the men's under-19s world championship bout in Tokyo. However, Nirowood's victory left the championship vacant because he was more than 28 ounces over the 9st limit at the weigh-in on Monday and for retested his title. If Matsumoto, 26, had won, he could have become the new champion.

The assumption was immediately made that players from both sides would be jettisoned between Italy and the East End, and that Ian Wright would be likely to face Milan or Internazionale each week as Charlton or Wimbledon.

Redknapp said: "If it developed, there would obviously be the opportunity for us to loan him to Charlton or Wimbledon."

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SPORT



RYDELL'S RACE TO CROWN P27 • VILLA'S MICHAEL OWEN P29

Nationwide to embrace pay-per-view

MANCHESTER UNITED versus Liverpool comes "free" with a Sky subscription tomorrow night but even if it had to be paid for on a pay-per-view basis there would be no shortage of viewers willing to pledge their £5 or £10.

Apart from the two red armies, many neutrals would be willing to pay to see such a heavyweight meeting. But Portsmouth versus Port Vale? Gillingham versus Blackpool? Or Barnet versus Carlisle?

How many neutrals would pay for that? How many fans for that matter? The Football League intends to find out. It will see out the old year and welcome in the new with the first step of a new era in which every game could be available, at a price.

While there may be a sense of quiet satisfaction should the Football League beat the Premier League to the distinction of being the first body to show a pay-per-view match in England - and the Premiership also have imminent plans to do so - this is not about one-upmanship but about trying to maintain a three-division professional league outside of the Premiership. Among other innovations being considered by an organisation undergoing radical change is the establishment of a salary cap among its clubs. A common feature in American sport and rugby league, it would be a controversial development even if the idea is to save clubs from themselves.

The pay-per-view experiment would open up with one of the Nationwide League's more attractive fixtures - perhaps Sunderland, who are currently packing them in at the Stadium of Light, or Manchester City, who are even managing to pull in full houses in the Second Division. Possible fixtures could include Manchester City versus Stoke or Sunderland versus Crewe or 28

BY GLENN MOORE

December, or Bournemouth versus Fulham on 2 January. Once the principle is established and the public's attention grabbed they would then experiment with less seductive dishes - perhaps Grimsby versus Bolton on 6 February or Leyton Orient's visit to Hartlepool on 9 March. The plan is for six or seven pay-per-view matches in total.

The idea, according to Richard Scudamore, the Football League's new chief executive, is to test the water. "No one knows what the market is for this at the moment. We have to find out what is appropriate with regard to the timing of games and the price to be charged."

Scudamore was keen to stress that the fixtures would be additional to those already due to Sky subscribers, and he noted that viewers should remember that there has never been a golden age of regular live televised matches, but that the whole area is in fact a relatively recent phenomenon.

However, it would also be naive not to perceive this as the first step towards viewers having to pay more money, more often, to watch football. Scudamore admitted that the next television contract would be likely to involve a further increase in the price of methods and broadcasters. It must be questioned how much demand there is for some of these matches. Already the market may be approaching saturation coverage - tomorrow's game is the 15th live match in 12 days. However, niche television is widely believed to be the future of the industry and it is understandable that the Football League, whose clubs are relatively impoverished compared to those in the Premiership, would look at every avenue of raising both the income and the profile of their clubs.

"It would be a disaster for the structure of football," he warned. "Collective agreements mean there is something of a level playing field. It would be the final nail in the coffin to the hopes of small clubs like Ipswich overcoming the big clubs."

Scudamore's biggest prob-

lem may be retaining a spirit of "mutuality" among the Football League's 72 clubs. The big pay-per-view earners, like Sunderland and Manchester City, may take some persuading to share the revenue they generate. "We need to find a formula for payments which is fair and equitable", Scudamore admitted.

The new chief executive's experience of American sports appears to be behind the suggestion of a salary cap, but it may prove difficult to institute without the anti-trust laws which are present in the United States. David Sheepshanks, who will shortly stand down as the Football League's chairman, said: "It is worth study and debate but as the chairman of Ipswich, I for example would not want to see a salary cap tied to turnover, as that would just preserve the gap between the wealthier clubs and others."

During his time as chairman, Sheepshanks has overseen a steady modernisation of the Football League, which will soon be opening new offices in London and Preston and closing down its isolated former bastion in Lytham St Annes.

"Keeping a healthy Football

League is vital for the future of the game in England," he insisted. He was opposed to the principle of media companies like Sky taking over major teams like Manchester United, and was fearful that the Office of Fair Trading, in the impending inquiry, would outlaw the current practice of imposed collective bargaining among clubs for TV deals.

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Peter Leaver, the chief executive, has contacted officials to sound them out, and the key issues will be discussed shortly as fears grow about the effect of the proposed BSkyB buy-out.

The League is in the forefront of this organisation, as revealed by *The Independent* yesterday, and it has confirmed

its submission to the Office of Fair Trading will be asking some tough questions.

Mike Lee, a League spokesman, confirmed that a submission would be made - as requested - to the OFT, which is investigating the proposed takeover. "This is a matter for the competition authorities. We will be seeking clarification on competition issues," he said last night. The Professional

Footballers' Association is preparing a submission which will back up the argument that United could become too powerful for the Premiership. Some Premier League chairmen have expressed reservations about the takeover, suggesting it could lead to a conflict of interests in television negotiations.

George Graham yesterday insisted it was business "as usual" after Leeds United turned down a Tottenham bid to speak to him about their vacant manager's post.

After Leeds told Spurs it would cost them £6m to poach Graham, he said: "I've been told by Peter Ridsdale [the Leeds chairman] that Spurs have made an inquiry for me, but the club have refused them permission to talk to me, so as far as I'm concerned, it's work as usual."

Edmilson takes some stick over carrot act

BY MARK BURTON

CARROTS WERE once reputed to improve a person's ability to see in the dark, but it takes more than sharp eyesight to penetrate the dim depths of the intellect that conjured up the latest in a long line of eccentric, not to say ludicrous, goal celebrations that have begun to illuminate Brazilian club football.

The latest little number, acted out at the weekend by Edmilson, involved the Atletico Mineiro striker pulling a carrot from his shorts after scoring the opening goal in a 2-0 victory over America and ostentatiously eating it in front of rival supporters.

So was Edmilson showing off the benefits of healthy eating for sportsman? No, he was making fun of the America fans, whose team are known as the Rabbits.

Whatever the carrot act did for Edmilson's digestive system, it certainly did not go down well with America. One America player, Dinho, was sent off for a vicious tackle on Edmilson during the second half in an apparent reprisal.

With both teams coming from Belo Horizonte, Edmilson's performance ranked somewhere between Tottenham fans making donkey noises at Tony Adams and Paul Gascoigne's infamous flute playing during an Old Firm match.

"I didn't want to offend any-

one with the joke. It was just to

liven up the derby," Edmilson

said, explaining that he kept the

carrot in his shorts from the

start of the game until scoring

in the 20th minute.

"Did I find it revolting to eat



Edmilson eats a carrot in front of the Rabbits Reuters

It? Of course not. I don't find my own body revolting."

He admitted, though, that Dinho was not impressed.

"He said it was a humiliation," Edmilson said. "He was very violent with me and was so angry that he spat in my face. He didn't see the funny side."

The referee, Jose Roberto

Wright, who officiated at the 1990

World Cup, was not amused ei-

ther. "What he did... with the in-

tention of provoking the rival

fans, merited a yellow card," he

said.

Acclaiming goals with

bizarre acts has increased in popularity among players around the world over the past few years, but Brazil probably still leads the way. Two years ago, a Corinthians player pro-

voked uproar by impersonating a floundering fish after a goal

against Santos, who are nick-

named The Fish.

One of the most popular is the telephone celebration, in which the scorer runs to the public phone behind the goal at the Maracana stadium and pretends to make a call. Wrong

number? Or just a hang-up?

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CAF

THE WEDNESDAY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- Change sheet, twisted and flimsy (3-7)
- Alliance concealed by Pablo Casals (4)
- I am getting ahead of beat, in sudden whim (7)
- He turns his back on wild region to the right (7)
- Where litter is left to fight a great deal (5-4)
- Sheer turmoil here in Surrey (5)
- Prison holding short Irish terrier (5)
- Does one retain our worry-heads? (9)
- All Souls? (9)
- Unfertilized seed united in love, possibly (5)
- Hides family on board (5)
- Master is east of craft (9)
- Value of tar - the last to join ship? (14)
- First pair getting the ball rolling (7)

DOWN

- Appetite got us in a bad way (5)
- Also call round for Rembrandt, say (9)
- A mitral disorder of a husband (7)
- Centre of corn earth-circle (One of 4 in AYLD) (7)
- All-points bulletin (4)
- Swarming insects not true to type? (10)
- Butcher's short sight? (7)
- Wood of bow in left hand (5)
- Flurry following wag-round (9)
- Sublime, neat bottom underthings (14)
- Rev up in gien, my car is mobile (9)
- Affluence of a Chelsea Ball? (9)
- Moor to return greeting (7)
- Disease of horse and chicken soon to begin (7)
- Salary - Archimedes' idea? (5)
- Somewhere to settle in kangaroo's territory (5)



York Giants on page 38A

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WEDNESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

MONICA

The great thing about Monica Lewinsky is that you can have her any way you want her and she's always a willing accomplice. Monica is, as we know, desperate to please, desperate for some attention and boy have we given it to her. If, in Clinton's twisted definition of sex, Monica did not count as "another person" or "any other person", more a series of body parts to be avoided, then she has indeed been reduced to a masturbatory aid. Yet given her inflated sense of herself, it is only fitting that the media should further inflate her until she has become little more than a walking, talking blow-up doll.

See her photographed in kitschy outfits by Herb Ritts in *Vanity Fair*. See her suicidal, devastated at destroying the man she claims to love. See her as the anti-Hillary, dumb and blowzy and impressionable. See her as a potential bunny-boiler, *Fatal Attraction*-style, unable and unwilling to let her man go. See her as a little girl lost who believes that Mr President will leave his wife for her. See her as a spoilt Valley Girl who certainly expects something for nothing, because that's what she is accustomed to. See her above all in the words of that expert on women, Alan Clark, as "a randy little minx".

All of this, of course, is a way of not seeing her at all. Though her image is everywhere, it has already become iconic. The full lips, the curtain of hair are given to Warholian reproduction. She looks good in black and white. Despite her make-over, the shoes, the sult, the oh-so-sensible handbag, colour betrays Monica. She still looks too fleshly, like she's trying too hard to look like a good girl. So we should not be surprised that she is overblown, this blow-up doll - and we aren't. No, what shocks us is that she should have real emotions; misguided, maybe, but heartfelt nonetheless; that she should be embarrassed about revealing the sexual details of her affair with the President, and that she should feel so hurt by his public pronouncements about her.

Since last week's publication of the Starr report and this week's release of her full testimony to the grand jury, it has become more and more difficult to slot Monica into any of the stereotypes on hand. If we want to view her as little more than a sexual opportunist, then her adolescent obsession with Clinton indicates that she doesn't have the required cynicism. From the minute she meets him she feels "an intense connection" with him. She falls in love with "the big creep". "I thought he had a beautiful soul," she gushes. "When I looked at him, I saw a little boy."

At several points while giving testimony, Monica burst into tears. Indeed the body fluid that seems to have been exchanged more than any other between Monica and Bill is salt water. Monica cries when she thinks of what has happened. Clinton's eyes water when he thinks of what might happen as a result. He told the grand jury that Monica sometimes got very distraught. "She got upset from time to time", especially when he couldn't or wouldn't see her. However he also revealed some affection for Monica. If this was spin then it was good spin. For the first time in this whole sordid episode, what emerges is the possibility that this was a consensual relationship based on mutual affection. Clinton will have done more for his poll ratings by speaking kindly of Monica than by portraying himself as the passive recipient of oral sex. In this way he truly has been guilty of turning Monica into little more than a dehumanised receptacle.

Yet if Lewinsky is not an opportunist, we know too much of her background to see her as a wronged innocent. In some ways she clearly knew what she was doing. In some. Not all. Dubbed "the clutch" by her White House colleagues, she would not let go of someone's hand if she thought they were important. She came to Clinton with a string of affairs with married men behind her and a reputation, if not as a liar, then certainly as an exaggerator. She was once sent home from the White House for wearing a dress that was too revealing. She was pushy and bubbly. We see her now in new photographs thrusting her way forward, smiling her big smile as she cozies up to the President. Yet all this self-confidence hides what the shrinks like to call "neediness", and Monica in her begging let-

ters comes across as very needy indeed. "Please do not do this to me," she writes, underlining each word. She feels disposable and used. She is desperate to believe that the President can't live without her when it must be apparent that he can.

While the rest of the world is by turns disgusted and titillated by details of blow-jobs, fumbling and antics with cigars, one vital detail has been ignored. We find it easier in some ways to deal with the finer points of fellatio than we do with the feelings that Clinton and Lewinsky may have had for each other. This may be because three or more languages are being spoken here. There is the intense and paternalistic legalese of Starr and his cronies, the romantic tosh that Monica spouts and the more "mature" outlook of Clinton.

Clinton may now speak of himself as a broken spirit, but by all accounts it is Monica who is broken. He still gets standing ovations. If Clinton insists she was having sex with him while he was not having sex with her, it now looks as if she was having a relationship with him even if he wasn't having one with her: "I know it sounds soooooo ridiculous, but I can't get him out of my heart," she wrote. "I love him a lot. I know it's stupid. I want to hug him so bad ... I could cry." Lewinsky often sounds like this. Gushing, sentimental and coy about sex. She sounds, in fact, about 13.

This combination of knowing sexual technique and emotional immaturity is what makes Monica both so hard to classify and yet so recognisable - she is neither victim nor vamp. Other women have been amazingly cruel about her. She is too big, too clumsy and tacky to be a stylish scarlet woman. If Clinton has an appetite for junk food that he knows is bad for him, these big-haired, soft-lipped women like Monica represent junk sex. The charge against her is that she knew what she was doing, therefore she was in no way abused. Yet to read her testimony is to see that of course she was used by the most powerful man in the world. She gave him oral sex in return for what? The fantasy that she was important, that what she thought mattered, that when it came down to it, it wasn't just about sex.

Yet how can we ask Monica the truth about sex when she wants to talk about love, and how can we ask her lover the truth when he denies the sex? After Clinton made his "apology" on 17 August, Monica revealed the full extent of her confusion. "What I took away was that I didn't know what the truth was. And so how could I know the truth of my love for someone if it was based on him being an actor?" No wonder there is a sense of unreality about Monica. She moves in a world where self-deception and delusion is an art form. In the dysfunctional mall of a childhood called Beverly Hills, many things can take the place of love: credit cards, power, celebrity, sex. Her father, who came to America as the child of German Jewish refugees who had fled from the Nazis, ended up running a profitable string of cancer clinics. He may not have been around for his daughter, but both she and her mother were able to "max out" on credit cards in the stores of Rodeo Drive.

Monica soon realised that present-buying was a way of achieving popularity. Then she started to give men other kinds of presents - as the President has found to his cost. Monica, then, is a girl who grew up knowing the cost of everything and the value of nothing, who finds it difficult to know when she is lying and when others are lying. She is a maternal girl in a material world but looks how she seeks something other than the trappings of wealth, something that talks of the soul.

For what we cannot cope with about Monica is her appetite and her desire. We already know about Bill, and anyway men are allowed appetites. Women are not and yet here we have Monica, overweight and over-sexed: a woman who wants too much is always too dangerous. And in wanting the most powerful man in the world to fall in love with her, Monica really did expect too much.

But as the world knows everything there is to know about the kind of sex she had, Monica, we find, has been talking to the grand jury about love. "When you look at it now, was it love or sexual obsession?" a juror asked her.

"More love," she responded, "with a little bit of obsession, but definitely love." Inappropriate intimate contact? It's neither here nor there. Only love can break your heart.

David Burnett/Contact/Contrast

Dumb blonde,
bunny boiler,
Valley Girl,
minx, victim,
fool for love.
Who is
Monica Lewinsky
and what does
she want?

BY SUZANNE
MOORE

INSIDE

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Power to Lib Dems

Sir: Your leading article "The strange death of liberalism under Paddy Ashdown" (21 September) misses the point.

As a Liberal Democrat, I want to see my party's policies put into effect. The only realistic way in which that can happen is to get Liberal Democrats into the Cabinet, or at least into the policy-formulation loop. That has happened to an extent, with Liberal Democrat representation in Cabinet committees, but we cannot demand our rightful share of power until our seats in Parliament reflect more closely the votes we gained from the public.

A bit of soft-pedalling now is a price worth paying for proper representation later, and I support Paddy Ashdown's refusal to take his eye off the ball. If he is unsuccessful, then "constructive opposition" should cease, and Liberal Democrats should feel no inhibitions about drawing attention to the Stalinist tendencies of New Labour.

The Prime Minister should remember that no Labour government has ever served two full terms and the British public are fickle. It is worth his while to keep his potential coalition partners sweet.

SIMON GAZELEY
Bath

Sir: It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the system of electoral reform being suggested would appear to be more to do with ensuring that the Blair/Ashdown pact continues to maintain a majority for the foreseeable future, rather than offering a radical electoral system which is fair and proportional.

As you rightly claim, the political differences between the two leaderships are becoming hard to distinguish and it would seem only fair to offer the electorate an opportunity for their votes for an alternative, such as the Green Party, to actually mean something. Lord Jenkins has already stated that his proposed system will still allow a party which receives less than 50 per cent of the vote to gain a majority – a rather perverse definition of the term "proportional".

The proposed new system, which is unlikely to be put in place before 2006 – if at all – will guarantee extra seats for Liberal Democrats and yet deny the Conservatives more than they have at present. At the same time, even if 15 per cent of the electorate choose to vote for the Green Party that proportion of the electorate will still be denied any representation in Parliament.

DAVID CROMWELL
*Green Party
Southampton, Hampshire*

Sir: What exactly is the objection of Lord Jenkins and Tony Blair to fairer and more representative voting through the single transferable vote.

Does Blair think that he will win the next election by an even bigger majority if he sticks to first-past-the-post? This government seems to be saying, "We can have PR but it has to be a system that is to our advantage".

It is about time that Blair is put on the spot and is asked what specifically is his opinion on PR. Only then, can we have a proper debate. We need that debate.

LAWRENCE ADRIAN SMITH
*University of Glamorgan Liberal
Democrats
Pontypridd*

Sir: You ask, "Why are the Liberal Democrats not leading the charge against the latent racism of the present panic about bogus asylum-seekers?" (leading article, 21 September)

If we were not, you would have a point. However, we are about to debate an emergency motion which condemns the Government for abuse of detention and withdrawal of benefits, and for attempting to deter people who attempt to exercise an undoubted

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



One Nation 3: in the run-up to the German elections, anti-socialist graffiti deface a poster of the local SDP candidate in the town of Zarentin, east of Hamburg in the former DDR. **Brian Harris**

right to claim asylum. You are right that this is a basic liberal principle. Reports of its death are grossly exaggerated.

RICHARD ALLAN MP
(Sheffield Hallam)
EARL RUSSELL
(Oxford West and Abingdon)
House of Commons
London SW1

Clinton's enemies

Sir: As was to be expected with such an unprecedented and sensationalised event, the release of President Bill Clinton's private grand jury testimony sent the world's media machines into overdrive. The "whole truth" was broadcast in its entirety on most major American networks and much of the evening news around the globe was devoted to the story.

Despite the phenomenal amount of airtime and print devoted to this affair, however, few have sought to answer the most important question. Has the President actually committed a criminal offence, such as perjury or obstruction of justice, that would warrant the start of impeachment proceedings?

Instead the global public were treated to the highlights of the broadcast similar to the highlights of an American football match.

Clinton's "game" was broken down in excruciating detail with a blow-by-blow account of his facial expressions, his hair-splitting definitions and his reluctance to answer some very personal and deeply hurtful questions. If the American public is as fed up with this scandal as they would have the world believe, they must start to demand the answers to the real questions.

Still more disturbing was the lack of substantial comment from both parties. Politicians from both parties are not weighing up the evidence compiled at enormous expense to the taxpayer by the special prosecutor. Instead they

are sitting on the fence waiting for the pollsters to do their work before they decide to support or impeach their president.

This scandal has not shown a weak president who is unfit to rule his country but an intelligent and humane president whose important work has been hindered over the last four years by a vain and fickle Congress and blood-sucking political enemies who have refused to play by the rules.

DANIEL HEAF
London London SE1

Surgeon or plumber

Sir: While sympathising with Dr Bannon's evident hurt at the cost of his recent house move (letter, 18 September), it is difficult to agree with the analogy he draws between the hourly rates of pay of solicitors, plumbers, locksmiths and TV repairers, and the pay of NHS consultants.

NHS consultants are salaried employees with job security and

generous pension arrangements. They pay no overheads for office space, secretarial assistance, stationery, heating, lighting and cleaning, or the capital cost and maintenance of expensive medical equipment with which to ply their trade. It is not unknown for them to complain bitterly about charges for car parking, however.

NHS consultants retain the right to as much private practice as they can find the time for, secure in the knowledge that they are topping up a monthly pay cheque that arrives in the bank account come what may. Many a solicitor or plumber would jump at such favourable conditions of employment.

DR SIMON WILLIAMS
Royal Shrewsbury Hospital
Shrewsbury, Shropshire

Sir: It is with a certain irony that I read Hunter Davies' assertion ("Who's making toast if not the nurse?", 18 September) that "finding doctors, from anywhere, is a continual headache". Down at

the foot of the medical ladder this just is not true. Junior doctors rotate through the specialties every six months – in the last scramble I finally got a job after the 43rd attempt. I was lucky; most of the posts seem to attract well over 100 applicants and some of my colleagues got nothing at all.

So I am intrigued by current moves to train a further 1,000 potentially unemployed medical graduates a year. Why? To anyone contemplating one of these places I can recommend the advice of Dr Bannon (letter, 18 September) – seriously consider becoming a plumber.

DR F S GOLDBY
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

Sir: May I suggest that Hunter Davies was misled about the numbers of nursing staff on duty during his recent hospital stay?

The minimum status of any qualified registered nurse is that of staff nurse and he stated that there

was "only one staff nurse in the part of the ward I was in". This would imply that the remainder of the staff were unqualified. Some of them may have been student nurses but it is more likely that many of them would be healthcare assistants or nursing auxiliaries.

This may not concern him very much since he was only admitted for minor surgery, but he might have been more concerned had he been receiving treatment for something more serious. The nursing shortage is very real, and we have all become so accustomed to wards being staffed by unqualified staff that we have come to accept this as the norm.

When the extra pairs of hands on the ward were supplied by students, the situation was not quite so dire. Nowadays the bulk of the care in many hospital wards is given by unqualified staff. No matter how caring or hard-working these people may be, the fact remains that there are too few qualified staff to supervise their work adequately.

BARBARA PEARLMAN RGN RHV
Kings Lynn, Norfolk

Sir: MC Fitzpatrick (letter, 22 September) makes clear that the Private Finance Initiative is a much more expensive way of providing new hospitals. It will also build in permanent conflict between a company whose priority is the highest rate of return for its shareholders, and the hospitals' professional staff still employed by the NHS, whose priority is the care of patients.

If surgeons have a need to operate at night, the company can veto this on the grounds that it cannot afford overtime payments for theatre cleaners and porters. Hospital staff already complain of feeling overstressed and undervalued. They do not need the extra burden of conflict with a private company.

DR M J HEATLEY MRCPsych

Oxford

A religious duty

Sir: Circumcision is practised by the largest minority in Britain, two million Muslims, plus hundreds of thousands of practising Jews. Circumcision for boys is a religious duty in Islam started by the father of the prophets, Abraham, and implemented by the Prophets Moses and Muhammad. The blessed Jesus was circumcised.

For years, we have been requesting the Department of Health to organise this facility through professionally trained doctors (with a small fee to the doctor and the hospital if necessary) in order to avoid "backstreet circumcision" with untrained people or in poor hygienic conditions ("Backstreet circumcisions maim boys", 21 September).

We do agree that some cases of circumcisions were not up to standard or had some complications, but the way forward is to recognise this religious need and to make proper provision for it. **DR A MAJID KATME**
Islamic Concern
London N18

Sir: I would like to contribute a female perspective to the circumcision debate.

A circumcised penis is easier to clean, it reduces the risk of cervical cancer and it is far more aesthetically pleasing. These are three valid reasons for removing the foreskin. I cannot think of one good reason for keeping it.

In an age when some cosmetic surgery can be paid for by the NHS, there exists no argument for surgeons to refuse this operation.

ANGELA WEST

Stegness, Lincolnshire

Another Powys

Sir: The article on John Cowper Powys by Clare Garner ("65 years after publication, the sales finally take off", 16 September) caught my eye. In the mid-1950s I worked for one of his brothers, Will Powys, in the Kenya White Highlands during the Mau Mau period.

Will Powys was the only non-writing member of the seven Powys brothers. He moved to Kenya after the First World War. I helped to run his 10,000 acre farm near Timau on Mount Kenya.

Will Powys' wife Mary (a Bowes Lyon) died in the 1960s, I believe, possibly because of the strain on her heart living at 8,900 feet. Their first son, Charles, died from a gun-shot when placing the weapon in the gun safe. Their daughter married one of Kenya's best "white hunters", Tony Dyer, and the younger son, Gilfed, is very much alive and active on behalf of wildlife conservation.

It may well be that researchers into John Cowper Powys and the other brothers should contact Gilfed in case correspondence of a literary value still exists somewhere in far-away Kenya. I recall a library at Kisima (the main farm, near Timau) but to be frank, to my youthful fleeting glance, John Cowper Powys' novels, like the later folktale, seemed to me child-like and trivial, and probably still would.

TIM SYMONDS
London W1

Wrong way round

Sir: Alan Simpson ("The Third Way is a scam", 22 September) overlooks an interesting point about government terminologies.

In normal human intellectual development, such as Newton's discovery of gravity or the understanding of DNA, the discovery usually precedes the naming of it. With our present government the contrary seems to be the case. Words or phrases are "discovered" – such as "stakeholder" or "Third Way" – and then and only then are people brought together to invent entities to which they may be applied.

This is an extraordinary reversal of the intellectual norms of the last three thousand years and most certainly deserves the epithet "new" if anything ever did. **IAN FLINTOFF**
London SW6

Now available to rent or buy: 'Starr Wars' and 'The X-Files'

A LOOK at just some of the new videos which have come on the market this week.

Sex, Lies, Apologies, Evasions,

and Videotape

A low-budget comedy in which new-comer Bill Clinton plays a man who is being accused of sexual infidelity. Oddly and rather effectively, you never get to see the accuser, only hear his voice – and that's another odd thing. Why is the accuser a man? Wouldn't the man's wife be the one to accuse him? The cutting is amateur, the camerawork shaky and the editing nonexistent. The effect is peculiarly ambiguous yet powerfully soporific. Not many laughs.

My Summer With Monica

A low-budget comedy in which new-comer Bill Clinton plays an Amer-

ican President who is impeached on charges of sexual harassment. He is given such a hard time by Kenneth Starr, the prosecutor, that finally Starr himself is arrested on charges of sexual harassment of the President. A funny moment, but it takes a long time coming.

Saving Privates

Stephen Spielberg's latest blockbuster in which a squad of hand-picked men go storming into the White House to cover for the President while he mounts a secret assault course. Eventually they come to grief, but everyone has a head of fun till then.

All the President's Men

Nice to see this classic back in circulation again.

Lust in Space

Nice to see this classic back in circulation again.

Low budget comedy in which newcomer Bill Clinton plays the part of a man who he can seduce a given person in a small alcove of the White House. He does so, but has no witnesses to prove it, so is condemned to repeat the act over and over again until someone believes him. A cross between *Warthog Day* and *Match of the Day*.

All the President's Men

Nice to see this classic back in circulation again.

The Avengers

Remake of the old classic in which Senator Joe McCarthy and his merry men hold the whole of America to ransom. In this update, it's Ken Starr and his merry men who try to paralyse America by cruci-

MILES KINGSTON

The effect is peculiarly ambiguous yet powerfully soporific.

Not many laughs

ying the President, but the effect is equally soporific.

The Hoarse Whisperer

Low-budget comedy in which newcomer Bill Clinton plays the part of the man accused by nameless prosecutors of having had a passing affair with some girl while at the same time being the most powerful man in the world. It is never quite explained why the most powerful man in the world would agree to such frosty questioning. Small wonder, though, if his answers occasionally become hoarse whispers.

Deconstructing Hillary

Wacky, bittersweet Woody Allen comedy. "Hey, cheer up, Hillary!"

he says at one point. "Don't forget that Hillary and hilarious are the same word!" She bursts into tears.

Chelsea Girl

Another wacky, bittersweet Woody Allen comedy. "Hey, cheer up,

Earth! Is the Starr Report actual-

ly the wastebasket of some alien computer system? Has America gone mad? This film quietly poses all the questions but gives none of the answers, rather like a US president.

Close Encounters in the Third Way

Low-budget comedy set in the White House. There are, apparently, two main routes from the Oval Office to the presidential quarters, but there is also a third, little-known and little-used, back corridor in which a president can, if he wishes, have a little discretion and privacy. That's the idea, anyway. In practice things can and do go disastrously and hilariously wrong. Starring newcomer Bill Clinton, I've got a feeling we're going to see a lot more of this man. Of, course, a lot less.

Democracy is important and this tract

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Democracy is more important than the arms trade

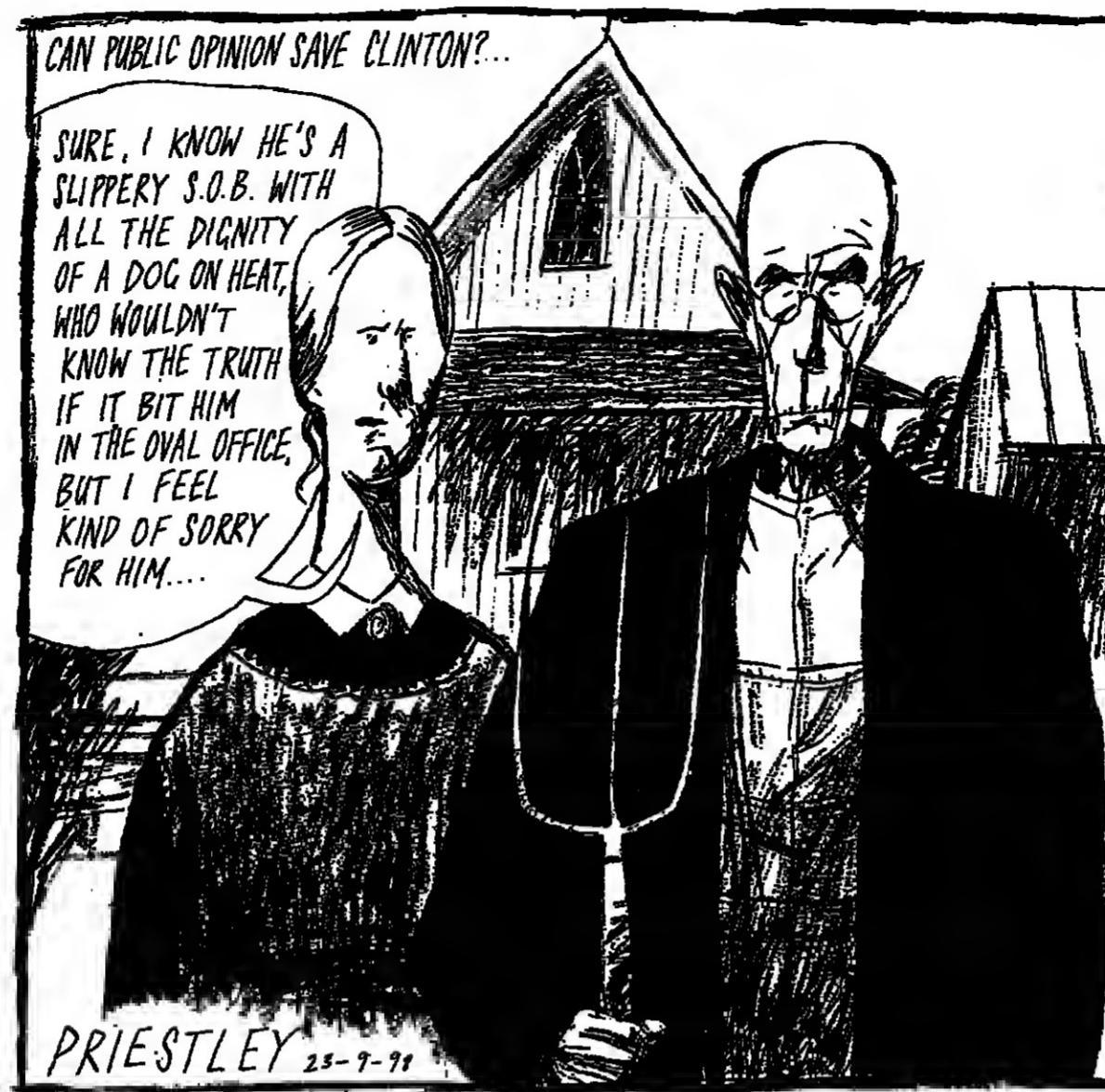
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S report into Robin Cook's "ethical foreign policy" makes disturbing reading. Amnesty has compiled a list of nations to which Britain still sells arms: Indonesia, still occupying East Timor; Saudi Arabia, imprisoning political dissidents; Turkey, busy cleansing Kurds from its eastern provinces.

To some extent, this is a welcome lesson in reality. It is very difficult to stand aloof in splendid isolation, posing as moral arbiters, especially in Britain's position as a middle-ranking power. Britain has defence links it is difficult to sever without loss of jobs, and commitments any new government cannot simply renege on.

This has been highlighted this week by the Foreign Secretary's embarrassment in Malaysia, forced to shake hands politely and smile at the tyranny run by his hosts crushes opposition. The arrest of Anwar Ibrahim, the former deputy prime minister, and police attacks on demonstrators calling for his release, have been excused by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad. His logic is that, since he had declared the protests illegal, he was justified in breaking them up. We may be forgiven for thinking that we have had enough of Mr Mohamad's preaching about "Asian values", the supposed set of authoritarian attributes that would bring the Pacific Rim quickly to the centre of the global stage. Not only does his vision look tarnished given the collapse of the "tiger economies"; now the iron fist in the velvet glove has been revealed, at the merest whiff of discontent caused by economic crisis. What he seems to ignore is that economic progress and democracy go together. Markets cannot survive without transparency – and the best way to secure that is accountability to a discerning electorate.

Mr Cook has decided to stay in Malaysia, contrary to his original plan. He was to some extent obliged not to leave the Queen alone, exposed to the charge of tacitly supporting Mr Mohamad. His ability to be diplomatic is a laudable quality in a Foreign Secretary, but not in all cases, and not at all times, especially while dealing with the kind of governments who care about arms more than the welfare of their people. Appeasing them will allow Britain's good name to become tarnished again.

To be fair, Labour's Foreign Office team inherited many of these links. Amnesty itself praises many aspects of Britain's work abroad since May 1997, especially in promoting democracy in the developing world. Clare Short's energy as Secretary of State for Interna-



tional Development has helped to give impetus to this. Amnesty also argues that other departments, especially Defence and Trade and Industry, have undermined the Foreign Office and promoted Britain's arms traders.

Those departments, though, are supposed to work under Foreign Office guidelines: if they are not, this is another example of the lack of grip that Mr Cook exhibited in the arms-to-Sierra Leone saga. Then, his department was allowed to drift into giving mercenaries the impression that their activities had official sanction. Now, his silence allows the impression that Malaysia can pass as many draconian security laws

as it wants, and still enjoy royal visits and British arms export guarantees.

The Foreign Office will always have to deal with regimes which abuse human rights, even if only to exercise some restraining influence. But it does not have to stay silent about their crimes in public. And it does not have to sell them arms. Tax-payers' money should not cover the losses of arms companies while the world's poor need self-sufficiency in clean food and water. And only the most short-sighted believe that arms exports are worth more in terms of British interests than by democracy and stability rolling out across Asia and the globe.

Will civics teaching make a good subject?

MINISTERS' COMMITTEES are not always just a means of placing problems on the back burner. Their members, such as Professor Bernard Crick, can come up with good ideas too. Those in today's report of the group advising David Blunkett on Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools are especially welcome.

"Civics" – classes in citizenship conducted in schools – are a part of the life of other democratic nations. British schools have not been so enlightened as their American or European counterparts. Such classes now look to have a future in Britain, given Mr Blunkett's enthusiastic response to the report. This is all to the good. Britons, as Crown subjects rather than equal citizens, living in a relatively old nation which did not feel the need to bind together polyglot races, have ignored questions about their identity, and neglected their communal life, for far too long.

Civics classes will not suddenly transform this situation: it is caused by social change that education alone cannot reverse. Access to diverting entertainments, and the decay of class bonds, has meant politeness has less and less relevance to daily life.

But some action is imperative: more than 80 per cent of teenagers polled recently knew only a little, or less, about Parliament. This is evidence of a wider problem: in fact, not many citizens trust politicians, and only a few more even care about what they do.

Turnouts in all types of elections continue to fall, as all parties' membership go on slowly declining. How is good government to be conducted in the midst of such indifference?

Teachers, already overburdened, cannot be expected to clean up all our problems; but school is the only place where the mechanics of our collective life can be taught systematically. Best practice already incorporates current affairs discussions in the syllabus: for all our sakes, schools attended by the majority of our children should not lag too far behind.

Cavalier laundering

For centuries, the Royal Library has housed what was believed to be the shirt in which King Charles I was executed. But costume experts at the V&A have revealed that the gory garment is a lady's nightdress, and the "bloodstains" are in fact ironing marks. The hunt is now on for the original shirt – perhaps with a low neckline – that got swapped in the palace laundry.

Please, my comrade prigs, don't let the far right win



DAVID AARONOVITCH
This week I looked upon the leader of the American Taliban, Ken Starr, and I knew my enemy

Why then is it, feeling the tug of this argument as I do, that as I watched Clinton on Monday, and listened to the Republicans lined up in the various studios, I began to believe more strongly than ever that he must under no circumstances resign, and that any sensible liberal must defend him?

There is a strain of the left that is, and always has been priggish. It dislikes the compromises associated with office and is offended by the business of politics in general, and the exercise of power in particular.

Like Dickens's preaching Mr Honethunder in *Edwin Drood*, it tends to love humanity but not humans. It will march happily alongside a new government for the first gay steps of its incumbency, but will go and sit on a fallen log and moan loudly, as soon as the road becomes stony.

He is – so this argument goes – innocent, self-indulgent and a menace to women everywhere: Jennifer Flowers, Paula Jones, Katherine Willery, Monica Lewinsky. And he lies. So, Clinton is not a man that liberals should feel any need to support.

SO AMERICA fiddled while the world burned. Demonstrations were broken up on the skyscraper-lined streets of Kuala Lumpur as President Clinton's taped evidence on the Lewinsky affair was played on American TV. Journalists covering the story – clammily penned together in hot studios, steamy newsrooms and humid press conferences – went quietly mad.

One senior BBC man, covering Clinton's address to the General Assembly of the United Nations, spoke of how the 26 heads of state and 100 plus ambassadors gathered there were "hit part actors on the edge of the real drama". One wonders what the listening President Mandela, who had probably already sanctioned his country's military intervention in Lesotho yesterday, and who has been desperately attempting to broker a peace in the Congo, made of being sidelined by the "real drama" of cigars and genitalia?

A charmless harness has now set in. On Monday I heard at least three respected journalists talking excitedly about Mr Clinton's videotape evidence. Of course, the tape was not live at all, it was a month old. But that does not sound half so exciting, does it? And because no one can quite believe the polls, and the press steadily support for Bill, every diner and mall in Middle America – from Butte to Buffalo – seems to have a foreign reporter in it interrupting eggs easy over to discover whether their statistically worthless consumers think Mr Clinton should sling his prropic hook.

Other moments to treasure include the description on TV bulletins of Ms Lewinsky's little blue number

being "stained with DNA" (an all-purpose euphemism that will surely find its way into Persil ads); the prosecutorial question that ran, "Mr President, if there is a semen stain belonging to you on a dress belonging to Miss Lewinsky, how would you explain that?" ("Well, Mr Prosecutor, when a boy reaches puberty, his...") and the moment when former White House aide Harold Ickes (whose name, I had always believed, was pronounced like David Icke's), was introduced to British viewers as "Mr Icky".

We are all Mr Icky now. True, we are forced to concede, the President of the United States did win a standing ovation at the UN, but might this not have been a case of the National Union of World Statesmen protecting their own? And true, these polls are beginning to look suspiciously like the settled mind of the American people. But, on the whole – left and right – we still think that Bill ought to go.

The leftish version of this is to express anger at Clinton's squandering of his own opportunity to "make a difference". In 1992 the man from Hope arrived with his talk of health care reform and fundamental change – and six years later the poor are still poor, still uneducated and they still cannot get decent health care. Moreover Clinton's America is still awash with guns and still regards itself as the world's policeman, with bombing rights over most of the globe.

He is – so this argument goes – innocent, self-indulgent and a menace to women everywhere: Jennifer Flowers, Paula Jones, Katherine Willery, Monica Lewinsky. And he lies. So, Clinton is not a man that liberals should feel any need to support.

WHAT PRICE will President Clinton pay? Impeachment seems rather harsh, and censure by Congress meaningless. If Congress, representing the American people, really finds Clinton's behaviour to be unacceptable, they should ask him to take a voluntary leave of absence for two months. This would humiliate him for a short period of time while also allowing him to continue his term of office. The genius of American civilisation is that it has always combined serious

concepts of governance with examples of public criminality and personal frivolity. We should enjoy the entertainment in the latter and draw useful lessons from the former. *The Jordan Times*

MONITOR
ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
International comment on the presidential crisis

IT IS quite inadmissible that while the President is addressing the UN, which looks to him to come up with a strategy for dealing with existential problems of peace and hunger in the world, that his man on the street is following his con-

tortions, his inarticulacy, and his anatomical hair-splitting worthy only of a green seminarist hauled before the bar. *Corriere della Sera, Italy*

nation. The hope now must be that after this much-hyped broadcast, America will put the impeachment issue to one side. The need for strong and effective international leadership from the US on world economy, on the Middle East, Russia – and not least in helping to consolidate the progress here – could scarcely be more apparent. *The Irish Times*

THIS IS THE White House meets national peep show. It makes

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I cannot accept a man who is a sodomist as leader of the country."
Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, on his sacked deputy, Anwar Ibrahim

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Beauty in things exists in the mind which contemplates them."
David Hume,
Scottish philosopher



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SOCIAL HIGHLIGHT of next week's Labour Party conference will be the Conference Dinner at the Stakis Blackpool hotel on Tuesday, following Tony Blair's afternoon address. Although the £2,000 tables have all sold out, don't look for many Labour-supporting corporate bigshots to attend. In fact, many of the tables will be filled with low-ranking employees of lobbying and PR firms, who have told their clients not to risk exposure in the press after Labour's Cronygate controversy earlier this year. Pandora suggests that next year Labour can raise even more money by holding a "conference dinner" where phantom guests banquet at empty tables on invisible smoked salmon.

MADONNA HAS no intention of sending her daughter Lourdes to Cheltenham Ladies College, despite recent newspaper stories to that effect, including one in Monday's *Guardian*. "It's not true. She hasn't applied to the school. It's not the kind of place where she'd send Lourdes," her spokeswoman, Liz Rosenberg, said yesterday. Rosenberg also denied that Madonna was moving to London. A fax from Kim Hill at the college reached Pandora yesterday, saying, "This story sprang from the pen of a journalist at *The Sunday Express* to whom I have never spoken and who, presumably following some lead, asked for our views were Madonna to send her daughter here... I have never confirmed that Lourdes is registered with us since we never disclose the names of current and future pupils."

ONE PAST Cheltenham pupil, Express editor Rosie Boycott, will comprise half of an irresistible fringe double bill when she appears at next week's Labour conference on stage with Derek Draper, whom she sacked a few months back. The two feature in the *New Statesman's* fringe meeting on media and politics. Will Derek be submitting his opening remarks to Mandy for pre-debate vetting? Will Rosie have Philip Gould polling the audience afterwards to determine the winner?

THE PARTY conference season always means a mad scramble for accommodation, and woe betide any delegate who leaves it late. However one Liberal Democrat MP has a unique way

to avoid the fuss. Peter Brand, MP for the Isle of Wight, travelled to Brighton in his boat and moored it at the marina. "It only took two hours to travel from the island. I can take the number 7 bus from there to the conference centre," he told Pandora. The pipe-smoking skipper/politician actually lives on his boat in London when the Commons is in session. However, all indications are that Brand will be coming ashore for next year's Lib Dem conference. It's being held in Harrogate, 47 miles from the North Sea.

AS THE world gawks at the President of the United States, Hollywood star Michael Douglas, whose marriage ended after celebrated bouts of adultery and treatment for "sex-addiction", has been seen on the town in New York with Maureen Dowd, the journalistic New York Times columnist who, not long ago, likened Clinton to "the Devil". Pandora is not usually concerned with such titillating, but this budding new relationship might help to explain why Dowd, a Roman Catholic who has savaged the President in the past for his Zippergate lapses, has suddenly had an amazing change of heart.

After the Starr report was made public, Dowd actually wrote a column defending Clinton, saying the report was not grounds for impeachment. This was followed on Tuesday by her column accusing Starr of treating Clinton like a gangster. Odd times create odd couples.

THE GALLAGHER brothers may just cause in feeling resentment towards talented actress Nicole Kidman (pictured), who opened last night in David Hare's play *The Blue Room* at the Donmar Warehouse. After all the criticism Liam and Noel attracted for their frank views on drug usage, will Nicole escape censure after telling US magazine *MovieLine*, "I've never done LSD, but yeah, I've done my share of drugs." She goes on to say that working in the film industry has brought her "in contact with every drug imaginable." Today, quips the wife of Tom Cruise, "I'm addicted to adrenaline". No doubt last night's opening at the Donmar in front of London's tough theatre critics must have given her a healthy rush.

OF COURSE there are differences between American English and the real English we speak over here. I remember vividly asking a hotel receptionist for he was a "hell hop" or something in New York to knock me up at 7am. He looked deeply shocked and suggested I should make the offer to a particular female receptionist to discuss terms.

This confusion between the two versions of the English language was further demonstrated when it was reported in the States that 60 per cent of the public were in favour of the President "carrying on".

However, despite these differences, I am sure "sexual relations" means to the ordinary participant in all the English-speaking countries sexual intercourse and no less and no more.

Before the days of enlightenment, to get a divorce you had to prove your spouse had committed a matrimonial offence: adultery, cruelty or desertion. Whether or not the wife got financial support from her husband depended upon her winning the divorce case.

They were exciting times. Enquiry agents climbing up the ivy with

ANTHONY SCRIVENER QC

To the ordinary spouse seeking a divorce 'sexual relations' meant the full works and nothing less

a pair of binoculars, the minute examination of hotel regulars by handwriting experts, the examination of the bed sheets by forensic scientists.

I recall one enquiry agent who had invented a device which resembled an ancient bed warmer which when inserted into a recently vacated bed would reveal whether one or two persons had been the occupants.

The great mass of divorces were

undecided but the petitioner for divorce had to give evidence of a matrimonial offence. As to adultery, if you had not got a confession statement taken by an enquiry agent carrying one of those small portable typewriters from which they were never separated, then the evidence must prove inclination and opportunity.

Throughout this period, to the ordinary spouse seeking a divorce "sexual relations" meant the full works and nothing less. For some reason the ordinary person did not like using the term "sexual intercourse". It did not come naturally.

Of course there were other terms in common use to describe the full works: "making love" is generally accepted as denoting sexual intercourse. I recall the *Newspaper of the World* used to use that delicate word "intimacy" to describe it.

I once had a problem with a farmer in an undefended divorce case who came home unexpectedly after milking to find his wife having sex (another description in common use) on the kitchen table with the grain-feed lorry driver. When giving evidence he said: "I came home early and found my mis-

sus on the job on the kitchen table." This caused the elderly judge to remove his spectacles and ask "What job was that?"

"You know -" said the farmer, "I decided to intervene to prevent the case going into a second day. Do you mean sexual intercourse?" I said hopefully.

This provoked a rebuke from the judge, who said I had no business asking a question which suggested the answer to the witness. It certainly did, but it did save a lot of time.

If you think about it, using "sexual relations" to describe sexual intercourse is logically correct. To substantiate this contention I shall have to use coded grungy language or else the *Daily Mail* will condemn this journal as pornographic (which might increase the circulation still further, I suppose).

Does a full-blown teenage slobbery kiss constitute "sexual relations"? Are youngsters viewing the difference behind the Nissen hut having sexual relations? Must it involve removing clothing, or is it covered by what grandmas used to call "being rude"?

There are obviously many borderline cases if you try to use "sexual relations" to denote every activity with a sexual intent. Placing a hand on a girl's knee would presumably constitute "sexual relations" if the perpetrator has sex on his mind.

How is the anxious OAP seeking a prescription for Viagra to answer the prying question of his GP? Does he admit to having sexual relations currently or not? Will this reduce his chances of getting it (if you'll excuse the expression)?

At the very least "sexual relations" is not clear-cut. I remember the newly wed husband complaining that his honeymoon was a disappointing as he had waited all night for his sexual relations to arrive but they did not come (if you'll excuse the expression).

So I contend that the President was correct. "Sexual relations" means sexual intercourse. What do earth President Clinton's sexual relations have to do with his ability to be an excellent president, only some Republicans apparently can tell, but most lawyers would agree with his definition of the term.

When will we get democracy back in the Labour Party?



KEN LIVINGSTONE

In this new women friendly NEC I have spent the year in meetings about disciplinary actions

YESTERDAY WAS the last full meeting in my brief revived career as a member of Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC). Following my unexpected defeat of Peter Mandelson for the vacant place last year, new rules make it impossible for me to repeat this wondrous trick. As readers will be aware from the row that has rumbled on in the pages of *The Independent*, the six places in the new constituency section are barred to MPs. In future, three MPs will be elected by and from Labour's MPs and MEPs. While Dennis Skinner's popularity is likely to allow him to snatch one of these three places, I will be joining Diane Abbott in the new category of NEC members in exile, awaiting the restoration of full democracy to the Labour Party.

In my eight-year absence from the NEC I was assured that the whole climate had changed following the party rule that 50 per cent of members had to be women. When I was a member from 1987 to 1998 the meetings were dominated by endless reports of disciplinary actions as party officials unearthed one teenager after another caught selling copies of *Mission* in places as far apart as Liverpool and Lothian. This invariably led to bad-tempered debates in which the male-dominated trade union section rubber-stamped Neil Kinnock's proposals and crushed the opposition of the left.

However, in this new woman-friendly NEC, I seem to have spent the last year at meetings dominated by endless reports of disciplinary actions as party officials unearthed one Old Labour member after another on councils as far apart as Liverpool and Lothian. This invariably led to bad-tempered debates in which the gender-balanced trade union section rubber-stamped Tony Blair's proposals and crushed the opposition of the left.

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Our peoples suffer together under the shadow of drugs and terrorism. We can no longer separate what we want to achieve within our borders from what we face across our borders.

If our finance, trade, media, communications and even our culture is, day by day more and more transitional, it would be strange and politically dangerous if our politics remained in compartments built just after the Second World War. The challenge is international. The response must be international. We must launch a new era of international partnership in which we modernise those institutions that allow us to co-operate and work together.

So I believe in the United Nations. But I also believe it must modernise urgently. All parts of the UN need proper accountability, to go with secure

policy had been rigorously debated at all levels of the membership.

Over the last 12 months on the national policy forum it has been left to barely a dozen ordinary members to represent all 400,000 party members in debates that have taken place behind closed doors. On each of the separate committees looking at a separate area of policy it has been ministers who, with their civil service support, have dominated the process. This has led to the production of fairly bland documents that have then been passed to the membership to discuss without any right of amendment.

We have been promised that, in future years, members of each policy commission will be able to submit minority reports that might be voted on at conference. It only takes a moment to realise how difficult it will be for ordinary party members with no resources to produce documents capable of rivaling those produced with the help of the Whitehall machine. Even if such reports can be produced, by the time they get to conference their authors will face a barrage of appeals to party unity. Their chances of overturning the official Government line will be pretty remote.

The Millbank Tendency claims that this new system will avert the damaging rows that lost us elections in the Eighties. Of course, the sort of internal civil war that ripped the Tories apart on Europe will lead to defeat, but recent history shows that, when the party conference disagreed with Labour governments it was invariably the conference that turned out to have been right, as Denis Healey bravely pointed out in his autobiography. From the Wilson government's slavish support of American policy in Vietnam through to Jim Callaghan's obstinate demand for a fourth year of wage

restraint in 1978, it was the gut instincts of ordinary party members that were proved right.

Yesterday's NEC shows we have not learnt this lesson. During the four-hour meeting we spent just two minutes discussing transport policy, endorsing John Prescott's proposals. The rest of the meeting involved endorsing the general secretary's conduct of the ballot for the NEC, rubber-stamping a decision to purge MEPs who share Labour's traditional values by placing them in unwinnable positions in the voting-list system, endorsing the leadership's choice as candidates for First Ministers in the new Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly and nodding through a variety of disciplinary actions.

I suspect that none of the decisions we took yesterday would have any really decisive influence in Tony Blair's battle to win a second term. My fear is that the outcome of the next election will be determined by the issues raised in the short but excellent debate we had on the economic policies of the Government.

I reminded the Prime Minister that, at my first NEC meeting a year ago, I had warned him that there was every possibility of a recession coming. In response, he rolled his eyes to heaven and joked that I was always predicting doom and gloom.

Yesterday David Blunkett told us that the economic fundamentals were sound and we were in danger of falling ourselves into a recession.

Quite the reverse is true. The combination of high interest rates and a strong pound leave us more exposed to the impact of the international economic crisis than we need be. Yesterday's brief exchange at the NEC should be happening at every level of the Labour Party and the trade unions, but it can't because, in a bizarre and inexplicable decision, the policy forum has decided to put off any discussion on economic policy during the last 12 months. If Labour fails to gain its second term, then the seeds of that defeat will have been sown in the decision to defer the open debate on economic policy in the years when it mattered.



Tony Blair cosies up to conference supporter Denis Healey PA

No such thing as regional conflict



PODIUM

TONY BLAIR
From a speech delivered by the Prime Minister to the United Nations General Assembly in New York

Fourth, peace-keeping must be accompanied from the start by peace-building, to restore justice, democratic institutions, prosperity, and human rights. Too often the Security Council deals with the symptoms of conflict but not with its causes. It needs to work with the rest of the UN, the World Bank and the IMF if it is to have lasting impact. I will be asking the Secretary-General to put to us new proposals to make this a reality.

Too many conflicts still rage. There are few higher priorities than restoring peace to the Great Lakes region of Africa. I am convinced the UN can play a crucial role in support of regional efforts and strongly encourage it to do so.

The Middle East remains profoundly worrying. I believe even seemingly intractable conflicts can be tackled successfully. We in the UK have made progress in Northern Ireland – and I thank all those around the world who have supported us and encouraged us in this. Now is the time for a further move forward in the Middle East peace process too. We are ready to play our part in bringing this about.

But I want to mention today another area of urgent concern: Kosovo. It almost defies belief that the security forces of President Milosevic are ignoring the clear will of the international community and inflicting brutality and repression on those they claim to see as their fellow citizens, nothing can justify scorched earth tactics and the forcible creation of hundreds of thousands of refugees. We propose a new Security Council Resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire and demanding an urgent end to the trampling on the rights of the inhabitants of Kosovo.

I have ranged widely but my point is simple: we face multiple new challenges as we approach a new century. Our only hope of tackling them successfully is tackling them together. We need political will and a sense of urgency. The problems of our modern world are too pressing, their consequences too immediate, their impact too far-reaching, for us to hesitate or to look away any longer. We are being given a warning: to act, to give purpose and direction. And the time to do it is now.

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Live fast, die young

THE EARLY death of the extraordinary sprinter Florence Griffith-Joyner, almost ten years to the day since the first of her three gold medals at the Olympic Games in Seoul, has raised again all the old suggestions that her success was based on performance enhancing drugs.

Indeed her very death at 38 has aroused the spectre - so worrying to many another athlete who has done the same thing - that this too was due to drugs. It was ironic that, on the same day as her death, the man with whom she will be perpetually linked in the annals of athletic speedsters, Ben Johnson, was in a Toronto court trying to get his life-ban for sports drug taking overturned. He was unsuccessful, and will remain, even more than the whole East German state-controlled doping system and the denominated Chinese athletes, the scapegoat for doping in Olympic sports, particularly athletics. The only difference in many people's minds, including this writer's, is that Johnson was caught.

Although many people might doubt it, journalists like second-hand car salesmen and politicians, are human too.

When we see great performances, we respond enthusiastically. Yet the silence that invaded the press box in the Seoul stadium, when Griffith-Joyner ran a record-shattering 21.34 seconds to win the Olympic 200 metres 10 years ago was oot awestruck, it was despairing.

Barely had Johnson fled Seoul in disgrace when his female peer was making a further mockery of the sport.

I first met Griffith-Joyner in 1985, when she was already a world championships silver medallist, albeit far from being as quick as the likes of her colleague, Evelyn Ashford, and a variety of East German sprinters, such as Marlies Gohr, Silke Gladisch and Heike Drechsler. At that time, Flo-Jo as she was nick-named later, at the height of her fame, was one of the most beautiful women I had ever seen, petite, oval-faced with unblemished skin.

It would be three years before I would get as close to her again, in Seoul 1988, by which time she had metamorphosed. Apart from the overall muscular definition and diminution of breasts, her jaw had elongated, a condition called acromegaly, known to be an effect of Human Growth Hormone.

She wore thick pan-stick make-up, to cover the widespread acne, a side-effect of male hormones, and her voice had deepened substantially.

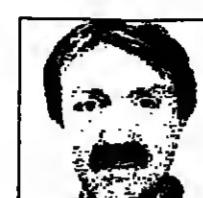
But she was not the only woman competitor in Seoul manifesting such startling changes. There was a British performer among them.

That, perhaps, as much as the sacrifice of Johnson, prompted the International Olympic Committee and International Amateur Athletic Federation to tighten up their drug-testing procedures.

Performances dropped off drastically in those events which benefited most from anabolic steroids.

But Pandora's medicine chest was not going to be closed so easily. Athletes, already earning substantial sums of money, began to invest in the undetectable substances, such as Testosterone, Human Growth Hormone, and later, following the cyclists' lead, Erythropoietin or EPO, the Tour de France drug of choice.

In a professional sportsworld increasingly dominated by television sales and ratings, Ben Johnson's latest manager asks pertinently what message the athletics authorities are giving to competitors when



PAT BUTCHER
Barely had Ben Johnson fled Seoul than Flo-Jo, his female counterpart, was making a further mockery of the sport

they offer a million dollars for breaking a world record. The response of IAAF President, Primo Nebiolo may be judged from a quote at last year's World Championships in Athens, "I am tired of discussing the problem of doping. I like these great events, these championships with their young people. Spending so much time following the pee-pee (urine testing) for me is not nice".

The use of performance-enhancing drugs in Olympic sports probably began in the mid-1950s on the west coast of the United States. Anabolic steroids had been developed to assist concentration camp victims restore wasted bone.

Body builders soon realised the drugs' potential, and the hammer and discus throwers, and shot putters who attended the muscle beaches soon latched on. It took the authorities until 1975, to institute bans.

In the interim, the Eastern Bloc had responded with their own drugs programmes. The big two-nation matches, USA v USSR were still in vogue at the time, as inter-Olympics competitions. Drugs quickly became the currency of the cold war as it was played out in the Olympic arena.

One of the best witnesses of the outcome of this was Dr Robert Vey, who resigned as Chief Medical Officer of the US Olympic Committee almost ten years ago, when he felt he was being given no encouragement.

In his revelatory book, *Drugs, Sport and Politics*, Vey wrote, "I understood that many people at the USOC were in the business for one reason: to bring home the gold. Just how the athletes accomplished that - well, few cared."

Vey's book is choc full of instances of US competitors in a variety of sports being exonerated without the offence ever being made public, the corollary to which is, and again this is a personal view, had Ben Johnson been a US rather than a Canadian athlete, he would not have been busted in Seoul, and would either have retired a hero, or even still been competing at 36.

The US Olympic Committee, and the US television networks hold sway over the Olympic movement. Canada comes somewhere down the list, ergo Johnson was expendable. This view was bolstered for many others when Flo-Jo retired barely six months after Seoul, on the threshold of making millions of dollars in appearance money.

Ten years after performances, inevitably are creeping up again, or speeding ahead in the case of distance running. That is partly natural, barriers are there to be broken, albeit Flo-Jo's and Ben-Jo's remain intact.

But drug legislation is weak and divided, for example baseball hero, Mark McGwire can happily take Androstenedione, a relatively weak androgen, to help him slug his record breaking number of home runs, while practically every other sport, Olympic or otherwise bans it.

More frighteningly, Dr Gabriele Rosa, an athletics coach, who used to work with cyclists, recently reported a spate of operations on cyclists, to enlarge their iliac artery (in the hip) to increase blood flow.

"What is more worrying," says Rosa, "is that taking EPO has reached such a level that many cyclists are sleeping with heart-rate monitors. If their pulse drops below 25 beats a minute, a buzzer wakes them, and

they get on an exercise bike to bring it back from the danger zone".

This is due to the thickening of blood caused by EPO, and up to a score of cyclists are believed to have died. Yet this year's Tour de France revelations are due entirely to the French police and judiciary. It should be a rule of thumb that no sports federation be involved in dope testing its competitors, arbitrating the results, or deciding on the penalties. It is even less in their interests to ban miscreants now than it was ten years ago.

The author is at work on a documentary on what makes Kenyans such great runners



Flo-Jo was not the only female athlete at the Seoul Olympics manifesting startling physical changes

RIGHT OF REPLY

JOAN CLANCHY

The former head of North London Collegiate School reacts to criticisms of independent girls schools

THE MANY JOKEY bits in Terence Blacker's piece following up Madonna's rumoured choice of school for her daughter ("A few parenting tips for Madonna", in yesterday's *Independent*) do not provide complete cover for his anxiety in the face of confident women.

His complaints about Cheltenham Ladies College are that the girls are too efficient, speak too clearly, are too assertive and do not have sexual experience young enough. The supporting evidence he gives about daily hockey and hymns, sixth-form dances and girls' pashes is 20 years out of date. The efficiency and confidence the students achieve, which makes him so nervous, comes from work-in-the-community projects, early self-reliance and self-discovery through music, art, drama and learning. There is frequent contact at all stages with local boys schools. Discos are one of many shared activities; they are supervised because all schools accept that as a responsibility.

Cheltenham offers a hugely privileged way of life for 13- to 19-year-olds. Its speciality is to nurture girls' confidence. How necessary this is still is shown by the kind of unreconstructed sexist rubbish that Mr Blacker rattled off yesterday. It is a low trick to accuse girls from such schools of being frigid because efforts are made to dissuade them from early sexual experience. Does he not know that the best fruits are the slow ripening ones not those from hot houses?

Five years ago a BBC film was made about a week's exchange between students from a mixed comprehensive and an independent girls school. The producer seemed to have Mr Blacker's agenda of sneering at bossy girls. But when the week was over the producer quietly filled in an application form for his daughter.

A masterpiece of ordinary life



IT ONLY takes about half an hour to read Raymond Briggs's moving and affectionate *Ethel & Ernest*. But the next reading lasts longer, and the one after that even more. For this is no ordinary book, although at first sight it could pass for one. Open any page, and there is immediate colour, shape and atmosphere: this is a strip-cartoon story, and if ever a book is going to be a best-seller, it must surely be this one.

Although Raymond Briggs has previously aimed most of his work at children, this is an adult book. Like his *When the Wind Blows*, it concentrates on ordinary people doing their best while living through events over which they have little or no control. But this biographical account of the author's own parents is no polemic. It focuses chiefly on domestic detail, starting with the couple's chance meeting in 1928 when Ernest, hiking to work as a milkman, believes that Ethel, a lady's maid, is waving at him from a window. He waves back, and although she was only shaking out a duster, this eventually leads to marriage, childbirth, middle age and finally death. Both his parents died in 1971.

G K Chesterton always insisted that what passes for ordinary in life is full of romance once seen with fresh eyes. *Ethel & Ernest* bears this out. Married life in the same house for 41 years might sound uneventful, but it comes over here as a time of quite enormous change. The arrival of relative prosperity after poverty and war is seen for what it is: a near-miracle in the lives of those who never believed they were owed anything or would ever get much. This book would certainly qualify as social history for the National Curriculum in schools. For older readers, the events illustrated on every page raise hosts of memories.

Briggs's draughtsmanship is faultless. He goes for total realism in his attention to detail, yet sometimes allows his characters to change shape,

according to mood. When his father has an outburst of temper, his face partially disintegrates. When the couple kiss and make up, as they always do, their heads extend almost grotesquely towards each other: a visual metaphor for their abiding love. When Ethel makes one of her snobbish remarks ("Ernest, don't sing those dreadful Cockney songs"), her nose literally sticks up in the air.

The style of Briggs's hand-lettered

captions also reflects changes in meaning and atmosphere. Whenever Ethel refers to her son's grammar school, the words are picked out in mock capitals consistent with her own state of awestruck pride. The strip-cartoon themselves constantly vary in size and perspective: 15 frames on one page may be followed by a single picture on the next.

There are some tough moments. Ethel is shown having a bad time in labour and finally lying dead in a hospital morgue. But the prevailing mood is gentle, loving and often very funny. Ernest is doctrinaire left-wing: Ethel innately conservative. Their arguments are also comic dialogues, whether about Hitler, the Beveridge Report, coal nationalisation, the Green Belt or the absence of a haircut on their artist son (Briggs himself, of course, who also plays a large part in the story).

The couple has an innocence worth any amount of sour knowingness. When Ethel says, after hearing that war is declared, "Why can't they all just be like us and live in peace?" she speaks for everyone caught up in a dangerous world not of their making.

Neither is shown as perfect: Ernest is sometimes jealous of his son's success, and Ethel is cold to her husband's amiable working-class step-mother, who arrives bearing some coal wrapped in newspaper "an' a couple of bottles of stout". Yet fundamentally these are good people, and this book is an unforgettable tribute to them and to others living through this fast-changing period.

NICHOLAS TUCKER

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NICHOLAS TUCKER

Florence Griffith Joyner

WHEN FLORENCE Griffith Joyner stopped the clock at 10.49 seconds during the quarter-final heats of the 100 metres at the US Olympic Trials on 16 July 1988, slicing an incredible 0.27sec off the existing world record, the sport of athletics was obliged to wipe its eyes, dust itself down and acknowledge it had just witnessed a phenomenal achievement. But the true nature of that phenomenon has been shrouded in suspicion ever since.

The margin by which she broke Evelyn Ashford's record was not only without precedent but way beyond all reasonable expectation for any athlete, let alone a 28-year-old whose previous best before that season had been 10.96sec, outside the top 40 marks of all time. For those inside the sport who, like Carl Lewis, believed Griffith Joyner's achievements were drug-enhanced, that day in Indianapolis was the day the cover was finally blown off a bottomless pit of steroids in athletics that had been festering, possibly for decades. When Ben Johnson tested positive at the Seoul Olympics a few weeks later, it seemed merely confirmation that the dreaded "fourth dimension" had well and truly arrived.

But for many others, "Flo-Jo" was the undisputed new queen of track and field. The long, painted fingernails, which forced her to use her knuckles instead of the tips of her fingers at the start of a race, the ostentatious bodysuits she designed for herself to run in and her sheer grace of movement and physical beauty made her a marketing executive's dream. She raised the profile of women's athletics in general, and turned herself into one of the best-paid sports stars of her generation. Besides which, unlike Johnson, Flo-Jo never failed a drugs test.

The seventh child of 11, Florence Griffith was born in 1959 in Watts, a tough housing projects neighbourhood of South Central Los Angeles. Her mother, a teacher, divorced her father and brought her children up to believe in independence and individuality values that never left Florence. She began running at the age of seven, joining the Sugar Ray Robinson Youth Foundation, and at 14 won her first title at the Jesse Owens National Youth Games.

She graduated as a straight-A student from Jordan High in 1978, and

The long, painted fingernails, her sheer grace of movement, made her a marketing dream

ing desire. It was hard for me to understand her, because, with her quietness and her shyness and her beauty, she doesn't really seem like she can have a killing instinct. But when Florence sets her mind to something, she can get the job done."

After making her mark at the Olympics, Griffith stepped out of the limelight for two years, working in a bank and as a beautician before making a comeback in 1987 when she again won silver in the 200m, this time at the World Championships.

She was no longer under the influence of Kersee, by now married to Jackie Joyner, who was to become one of the greatest of all Olympians.

It was Joyner's older brother Al, the 1984 Olympic triple-jump champion, who was now coaching Griffith, and a few weeks after the World Championships they were married.

That winter she claimed to have worked prodigiously, lifting heavy weights and running long distances, but at her first meeting the following spring, although she appeared a larger version of the previous year's model, a radical improvement in her times was not at once apparent.



Flo-Jo acknowledges her fans at the Olympic Games in Seoul, 1988. She won three gold medals

Then, three weeks before the Olympic trials, she improved her personal best in the 100m to 10.89sec and in the trials' first round ran a wind-assisted 10.60 before her historic record run.

She won the trials final in 10.61, still the second fastest time, which has only begun to be approached this year by the 22-year-old American Marion Jones, who has won 10.65.

In the Games themselves she

swept to victory by wide margins in both sprints, adding an equally astounding 200m world record 21.34sec to the 100m record she already held; neither time has yet been bettered.

A third gold medal in the sprint relay followed, and a silver in the 4x100m relay but the tongues soon started wagging. Ben Johnson's disqualification may have robbed Flo-Jo of the spotlight her achievements merited, but it also saved her from closer scrutiny by the wider public. I sat in the athletes section of the Seoul Olympic Stadium and listened as one of her closest rivals complained bitterly to her companions that Flo-Jo was taking steroids, and out loud after the Games Carl Lewis said: "It was a

common belief on the track circuit that Florence had used drugs."

When questioned, Griffith Joyner always denied it and said she welcomed the introduction of random testing. But her failure to take court action against Lewis, and her sudden retirement four months after the Olympics just as random testing was about to be introduced, left her fiercest critics in little doubt.

In 1990 Flo-Jo gave birth to her daughter, Mary Ruth Joyner or "Mo-Jo" to her friends, and the last few years of her life were occupied by an apparently exhausting schedule of designing and modelling clothes, working with underprivileged children through the Florence Griffith Joyner Foundation, acting in the US soap *Santa Barbara*, and NBC's *227*, writing a fitness column for a magazine, acting as spokeswoman for a variety of charitable causes and, most recently, being the chair of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

Towards the end of 1995, having

comeback but in March 1996, on a flight from California to St Louis, she suffered a heart seizure.

Despite, or perhaps because of her achievements, Florence Griffith Joyner remained an enigma to the American people, never allowing her privacy to be compromised even in the face of such a demanding life style. Details of her illness were kept secret and her death on Monday, following a second seizure, came at a time when athletics administrators were considering declaring her fastest time of 10.49 null and void owing to a faulty windspeed reading at Indianapolis.

It is sad to say of anyone, especially one who gave such aesthetic pleasure to millions and who worked so hard at everything she turned her hand to, that her death may make more sense to many than her life in athletics ever did.

ADAM SZERETEL

Delores Florence Griffith, athlete; born Los Angeles 21 December 1959; married 1987 Al Joyner (one daughter); died Laguna Beach, California 21 September 1998.

Clara Calamai

WHEN AMEDEO Nazzari ripped open Clara Calamai's blouse in the 1941 costume drama *La Cena delle Beffe*, the moralistic cinema-goers of Fascist Italy held their collective breaths in shock: in 18 frames which were to guarantee Calamai a place in film history, naked breasts were seen on an Italian movie screen for the first time.

Like a true screen goddess, when Calamai died she left the world guessing about her age: some film guides put it at 23, others at 89. She had spent more than 20 years in diva-like retirement, refusing to perform after her appearance as an aged, murderous actress in the 1975 horror film *Profondo Rosso*, and shunning the press.

Calamai's acting career began in 1938 when, favoured by the Fascist authorities who ensured that cinema promoted the party line, she took role after role in the lightweight comedies and heroic costume dramas which were the stock-in-trade of the regime's official film-makers. Small wonder then that the ex-

posed breasts of this perfectly line-toeing actress caused a scandal.

The scene, recalls the cinema historian and critic Tullio Kezich, soon disappeared from most of the copies available on the commercial circuit: not because of the wrath of the censors, but because excited projector-operators took their scissors to this bit of cinema memorabilia.

Calamai's unexpected kicking-over of traces may have been what persuaded Luchino Visconti to call her up for an interview when Anna Magnani, his first candidate to play the brusque innkeeper in *L'Ossequio* (1941), announced that pregnancy would keep her out of the film.

For a work which was to change the course of film-making, giving birth to neo-realism, Clara Calamai was a strange choice. It was one that paid off however: all the dramatic capability previously submerged under saccharine performances of insignificant scripts – the whining courtesans of *La Cena delle Beffe* was memorable only for those 18 frames – came to the fore in a mas-

terful performance as a woman who seeks to escape the boredom of her provincial life by taking a lover and persuading him to kill her husband.

Visconti – on whom Calamai had a well-publicised but unrequited crush – directed her again opposite Marcella Mastrianni in *Le Notti Bianche* in 1957. Around these two high-points, Calamai made 45 other movies, many of them tributes to her unfortunate gift for selecting terrible screenplays.

In part, Calamai told the daily *La Repubblica* in a rare interview three years ago, this was due to bad luck. "Rossellini had offered me the leading role in *Roma, Città Aperta*, but unfortunately I had to turn it down," she recalled. "Anna Magnani got her own back then, and took the part that was meant for me."

ANNE HANLEY

Clara Calamai, actress; born Prato, Italy 7 September 1908 (or 1915); married Leonardo Bonzi (deceased); died Rimini, Italy 21 September 1998.



Calamai in *La Cena delle Beffe*, 1941

BILLY SUTCLIFFE was a right-hand batsman of considerable hitting power who captained Yorkshire for two years in 1956-57 and whose misfortune it was to carry the excess weight and expectation conferred by an internationally famous name. It also fell to him to take over the leadership at a turning-point in the history of what had been the most successful county cricket club.

Herbert Sutcliffe had, with Jack Hobbs, formed the most renowned opening partnership in the game and Billy, born like Len Hutton, in Pudsey, was named and groomed to succeed. Herbert, an ultra-professional, carried himself like an amateur and was offered the Yorkshire captain-

cy in 1928, shrewdly declining, probably sensing that the time of the professional captain had not yet arrived.

Billy however was raised as an amateur schooled at Rydal but brought up in the demanding cricket of the Yorkshire leagues. He first appeared for Yorkshire in 1948 and for some years it was expected that either he or Geoffrey Keighley would succeed Norman Yardley, all amateurs, in the captaincy.

Keighley left to farm in Australia so Sutcliffe, as the leading amateur, seemed the obvious candidate although we now know that Hutton, soon to be knighted after serving as a professional captain of England, would have liked to have been asked.

Billy Sutcliffe, it was said afterwards, was too close and too popular in the dressing room to deal with a team of strong, belligerent characters that included Trueman, Wardle, Appleyard, Close and Illingworth, Yardley, Hutton and other moderating influences such as Willie Watson and Ted Lester had either gone or were going. Yorkshire needed a Lord Hawke or a Brian Sellers to control and motivate such a fractious bunch.

There were outside pressures, too, for Surrey won a fifth successive championship in 1956, a feat difficult to swallow in the Ridings. Sutcliffe could have claimed, literally, "it never rains but it pours" for, in addition to a sad crop of injuries, 11

full days were lost to the weather.

He soldiered on through another summer, saw Yorkshire restored to contention, in third place, and then wisely took himself off to business in the family sportswear company. Brian Close summed him up as "a super lad who made himself into a county cricketer because it was expected of him and because he believed in Yorkshire cricket and its right to pre-eminence. He was happier having a pint and a natter than he was in cracking the whip on the field."

Don Wilson, later to bowl for England and coach MCC, said of Sutcliffe: "It was unfair to suggest he was only in the job because of his name. He was a great league play-

er and had proved himself a knowledgeable captain for Leeds. It was the senior players who were at the root of this maladjustment."

Like preceding captains, Billy Sutcliffe was expected to serve on the committee, which he did faithfully, little knowing that the 21-year-old he welcomed when captain of the Leeds club in 1961, would bring him later grief. As Geoffrey Boycott's fame and records grew Sutcliffe was part of the committee that tried to maintain that the Club and the Team were greater than the Man, a battle he lost when he was swept from office by Boycott's supporters in 1984.

DEREK HODGSON

William Herbert Hobbs Sutcliffe, cricketer; born Pudsey, West Yorkshire 10 October 1926; married two daughters; died Collingham, West Yorkshire 16 September 1998.



Belief in Yorkshire cricket

Eva Reichmann

EVA REICHMANN was a writer in exile, a scholar, author, and outstanding "civil servant" within the German-Jewish community which had found a haven in Great Britain. The great German universities had shaped her earlier thinking, but the LSE (London School of Economics) in the end gave her the tools to write a definitive text on the causes of German anti-Semitism.

As one of the leaders of the German-Jewish community before and during the Hitler period, she found it hard to adjust to the life of a refugee in London. Slowly, with the help of her jurist husband Hans Reichmann, she came to develop and to serve many of the organisations that German refugees founded. Her thinking and organisational ability came to be recognised. Arnold Panzer, Director of the Leo Baeck Institute which she helped found, described her as "one of the greatest German Jewish women of this century".

In Berlin, Reichmann had also worked with the Jewish Agency and the hardest task there was her work with Leo Baeck at the Reichsvereinigung, which had to represent all of the Jewish community against those who planned to destroy it.

In 1933, Reichmann joined one of the last groups who managed to emigrate to England. A grant from the American Jewish Committee enabled her to study at the London School of Economics where she obtained her PhD, with a dissertation on "The Social Sources of National Socialist Anti-Semitism". Published as *Hostages of Civilisation* (1950), it became a classic text.

In 1942-43 she worked for the BBC's German listening service. From 1943 to 1959 she led the research section of the Wiener Library, was a member of the Institute of Jewish Affairs, and served on the Leo Baeck Institute executive, where she contributed to its yearbooks. She belonged to the Belsize Square Synagogue established by the Frankfurt rabbi George Salzberger. There, and in the larger community, she came to be recognised as a scholar and community leader in whom the best of German Jewish life endured.

Eva Reichmann's many German and English writings showed an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of European history and of social trends, with a profound openness to human frailty and personal suffering which enabled her to enter into dialogue with the German community. Apart from the often reprinted *Hostages of Civilisation*, her writings included the *Pestscript for Leo Baeck* (1953), *Memorial Volume for Leo Baeck* (1959) and *On the Track of Tyranny* (1960); many other important essays from the Thirties to the Seventies were collected in the two-volume *Größe und Verhängnis deutsch-jüdischer Existenz: Zeugnisse einer tragischen Begegnung* ("Greatness and Fate of German-Jewish Existence: testimony of a tragic encounter", 1974).

The numerous honours she received in her later years included the Moses Mendelsohn Prize presented to her by Richard von Weizsäcker; then Mayor of Berlin, who had earlier given her the Officers Cross of the German Legion of Merit in 1969. This was later followed by the major award given by Germany, the Commander's Cross of the German Legion of Merit. One of her most cherished honours was the "Buber-Rosenzweig Medal" presented to her by the German Council for Christian-Jewish Co-operation.

Eva Reichmann once wrote about Leo Baeck: "Not every time finds its great man, and not every great idea finds its time." Leo Baeck found his time. A German Jew in his life and in his death celebrates his great man in him... In his dignity and wisdom rested... a radiance which could even illuminate this most unhappy episode in Jewish history. Much of this applied to Eva Reichmann, a wise woman of her time.

ALBERT FRIEDLANDER

Eva Gabriele Jungmann, writer, historian and community leader; born Lublinitz, Upper Silesia 16 January 1897; married 1932 Hans Reichmann (died 1964); died London 15 September 1998.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

In the Palace of Westminster, London, on Saturday 12 September, the Duke and Duchess of York will host a reception for the Royal Commonwealth Society.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Sunday 13 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, on Monday 14 September, the Queen Mother will attend a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Tuesday 15 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, on Wednesday 16 September, the Queen Mother will attend a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Thursday 17 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, on Friday 18 September, the Queen Mother will attend a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Saturday 19 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, on Sunday 20 September, the Queen Mother will attend a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Monday 21 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, on Tuesday 22 September, the Queen Mother will attend a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Wednesday 23 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, on Thursday 24 September, the Queen Mother will attend a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Friday 25 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, on Saturday 26 September, the Queen Mother will attend a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Sunday 27 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, on Monday 28 September, the Queen Mother will attend a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Tuesday 29 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.

At the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London, on Wednesday 30 September, the Queen Mother will attend a performance of *Die Zauberflöte*.

At the Royal Albert Hall, London, on Thursday 31 September, the Queen Mother will attend a service of thanksgiving.



Demonstrators in Tirana last week following the shooting of the Albanian opposition leader Azem Hajdari

Mario Laporta

Azem Hajdari

IN THE VOLATILE AND, AT TIMES, DANGEROUS WORLD OF ALBANIAN POLITICS, THERE WERE FEW, IF ANY, FIGURES WITH SO MANY PERSONAL AND POLITICAL ENEMIES AS AZEM HAJDARI, THE 35-YEAR-OLD OPPOSITION POLITICIAN AND FORMER STUDENT LEADER, WHO DIED AFTER BEING GUNNED DOWN, ALONG WITH A BODYGUARD, OUTSIDE THE OFFICES OF HIS DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP) IN CENTRAL TIRANA.

The killing of Hajdari, who had played a leading part in the pro-democracy movement against the Communist régime in 1990, came as the culmination of several violent incidents involving him, including attempts on his life. The most spectacular of these had occurred almost exactly a year earlier when he was badly injured in a shooting incident inside the Albanian parliament. His assassination put an end to an eight-year political career which was as dramatic at its beginning as it was at its end.

Hajdari came from a poor family in Albania's mountainous northern region of Tropoja, known for its traditions of bravery, violence and the blood feud, or *hakmarrje*, as well as for its poverty and reliance on cross-border smuggling into Kosovo. He was nearing the end of a philosophy course, which in those days meant Marxism-Leninism, at Tirana University, when the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe began to shake Albania, Europe's last Stalinist bastion.

The disintegration of the Communist régime began in the summer of 1990 when thousands of desperate Albanians scaled the walls of Tirana's foreign embassies in an ultimately successful attempt to leave the country. But the pressure for change continued to build up and in December students took the initiative by staging protests against their worsening living conditions in the halls of residence.

Almost immediately the students' agenda turned political with demands for political freedom. Bold, uncompromising and with a populist appeal, Hajdari emerged as the natural leader of the students' movement. Within days he became one of the founders of the DP, the first non-Communist party in Albania following the Second World War, and was elected its first chairman.

But Hajdari's stint at the top of the DP proved short-lived. Two months later he was replaced as party chairman by Sali Berisha, the cardiologist who had been sent by President Ramiz Alia, Albania's last Stalinist leader, to negotiate with the students. Thereafter, Hajdari's ambivalent, and periodically uneasy, relationship with Berisha, another native of the Tropoja region, determined much of his political career.

It took another year before the DP won the parliamentary elections and Berisha emerged as President in April 1992. Hajdari received no government job. Instead, he had to settle for the post of chairman of the parliamentary commission on public order and the National Intelligence Service (SIIK) - the newly reconstituted secret police.

In the meantime, Hajdari's influence was rapidly diminishing. Within months of the DP's taking power, Hajdari was in trouble for making critical remarks about the new government in a television interview which was never shown. Hajdari then left for a few months on a scholarship to the United States in a move that appeared designed to get him out of the way.

Hajdari remained a Maverick who could never be silenced. In 1993 he was found guilty of assaulting a fellow DP official, though he was let off with a warning. On one occasion he threatened to shoot himself unless police stopped

evicting a group of ex-political prisoners of the Communist era from a building where they were staging a hunger strike in support of obtaining better provisions from the state.

For a while Hajdari was tempted to join the Democratic Alliance, the party that had broken away from the DP or even to set up a new organisation along with other disillusioned members of the students' movement. But the prospects elsewhere seemed bleak so he stayed within the DP, the party that remained firmly in power until the collapse of the pyramid investment schemes at the beginning of 1997.

Regional and personal loyalties, the cement of Albanian politics, kept him within Berisha's orbit even when they were otherwise at odds. One such occasion was Hajdari's unsuccessful attempt in 1996 to take over Albania's main trade union federation, a bid that had been prompted by his frustration with his lack of influence within the DP.

The years of estrangement with Berisha came to an end with the DP's disastrous defeat in the 1997 elections which followed an uprising against the Berisha regime after the pyramid schemes had crashed. Many of Berisha's top officials left politics or failed to get re-elected to parliament. Hajdari, on the other hand, had not been in government and was not held responsible for the disasters of the previous year. He had also retained some of his popularity from the time of the student demonstrations.

Hajdari now emerged as a close associate of Berisha in opposition. But his combative nature had not changed. In September 1997 he got involved in a fight with Gafur Mazzru, an MP of the Prime Minister Fatos Nano's governing Socialist Party, in a dispute over a rise in the rate of value added tax. Two days

later Hajdari was seriously injured when Mazzru shot him in parliament several times.

Although the opposition portrayed the shooting as part of a political campaign against the DP, it had every appearance of a revenge attack and Hajdari was sentenced to 11 years' gaol. Within six months Hajdari was again in trouble over bullying. Following an incident in which his bodyguards forced the police chief of the northern town of Shkodra to vacate the VIP box in the local football stadium, police blocked the road to stop his group's fleet of cars returning to Tirana. After a stand-off lasting several hours Hajdari's companions were disarmed.

Hajdari's confrontational attitude made him into something of a battering ram against the Nano government which has been struggling with only limited success, to restore law and order following last year's uprising.

His death - in a hail of bullets - bore all the hallmarks of a professional killing which the DP has blamed on the government. But, with all the enemies he made in his personal, business as well as political life over the years, it may never become clear for what reason Hajdari was killed.

Hajdari, who leaves a widow, Jeta, and two children, was a larger-than-life character who had led a dangerous existence. For much of the time he remained on his side; but it finally ran out amidst the kind of violence that has become a recurrent characteristic of post-Communist Albania.

GABRIEL PARTOS

Azem Hajdari, student leader and politician: born Bajram Curri, Albania 12 March 1963; married (one son, one daughter); died Tirana 12 September 1998.

GAZETTE

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of Gloucester takes the salute at a Freedom Parade for Royal Air Force Locking, Weston-super-Mare, and afterwards takes the salute at a Sunset Ceremony marking the closure of RAF Locking. Princess Alexandra visits the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley, Renfrewshire, to mark the 50th anniversary of the National Health Service, and opens the new Community Mental Health Resource Centre, Paisley.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Toby Balding, racehorse trainer, 62; Mr Ray Charles, rhythm and blues singer, 68; Baroness David, former government whip, 85; Lord Feldman, chairman, Better Business Opportunities, 72; Mr James Guinness, former deputy chairman, Guinness Peat, 74; Mr Julie Iglesias, musician, 55; Mr Richard Lambert, editor, Financial Times, 54; Dr Brian Lloyd, nutritionist, 78; Mrs Genista McIntosh, executive director, Royal National Theatre, 52; The Right Rev Michael Mankelow, former Bishop of Basingstoke, 71; Mr Larry Mize, golfer, 40; Mr Mickey Rooney, actor, 76; Mr Bruce Springsteen, singer and songwriter, 49; Sir Roger Tolson, High Court judge, 52; Admiral Sir John Treacher, 74; Mr John Wilkinson MP, 58.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: William Archen dramatic critic and playwright, 1856; Mary Elizabeth

Coleridge, novelist and poet, 1861; Emma Magdalena Rosalia Marie Josephine Barbara, Baroness Orczy, novelist, 1865; Walter Lippman, journalist and writer, 1889; Paul Delvaux, painter, 1897.

Deaths: Nicholas-François Mansart, architect, 1666; Robert Dodsley, poet, publisher and bookseller, founder of the *Annual Register*, 1764; Richard Parkes Bonington, landscape painter, 1828; John Vanderlyn, painter, 1852; Prosper Merimée, novelist, 1870; Urbain Jean-Joseph Leverrier, astronomer, 1877; Thomas Webster, figure painter, 1886; William Wilkie Collins, novelist, 1889; Eliza Cook, poet, 1889; Ivar Andreas Aasen, philologist, 1896; Julius Adam, painter, 1913; John Morley, first Viscount Morley, statesman, 1923; Sigmund Freud, psychoanalyst, 1939; Edith Glyn, novelist, 1943; Pablo Neruda (Neftali Ricardo Reyes), Chilean poet, 1973.

On this day: the Greeks defeated the Persians at the

Battle of Salamis, 480 BC: the Lancastrians were defeated by the Yorkists at Borebeath, 1459; the Battle of Worcester was won by Prince Rupert, 1642; Montrose was defeated at the Battle of Leslie at the Battle of Philiphaugh, 1645; the British under Wellesley defeated Scindia and the Rajah of Berar at Assaye, 1803; Johann Gottfried Galle discovered the planet Neptune, 1846; two awards for gallantry, the George Cross and the George Medal, were instituted, 1940; General Juan Perón was re-elected as president of Argentina, 1973.

Museum: Deidre Robson, "American Design in the 1920s", 2pm.

Tate Gallery: Bernard Smith, "Modernism's History", 6.30pm.

British Museum: Sam Moorhead, "The British, Vain and Philosophical: emperors of Rome", 11.30am.

The Wallace Collection: London W1: Patricia Falke, "Dutch Paintings in the Wallace Collection", 1pm.

Royal Academy of Arts: Marilyn McCully, "Picasso: painter and sculptor in clay", 1pm.

DINNERS

Distillers' Company: The Lord Mayor of London, Sir Richard Nichols, accompanied by the Sheriffs and their ladies, attended a Liver and Ladies' Banquet of the Distillers' Company held yesterday evening at the Mansion House, London EC4. Mr Christopher R. Mitchell, Master, presided.

The Lord Mayor the Bishop of London and Mr Gerald Milsom also spoke.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Gabriele Finaldi, "Canaletto (iv): Venice through Canaletto's eyes", 1pm; Jonathan Miller, "Mirror Image", 6.30pm. Victoria and Albert

HISTORICAL NOTES

STANLEY WEINTRAUB

Albert's memorial not for who he was

AS THE Queen reopens the restored Albert Memorial today we may wonder what the Prince Consort, her great-great-grandfather, would have thought of it.

Expected to endure, the monument suffered unanticipated obsolescence. The Victorian gingerbread metalwork rusted; the gilding was destroyed during the Great War in a botched attempt to dull the glint from intruding Zeppelins; and "friendly fire" in the next war from anti-aircraft guns in Hyde Park popped the orb at the top, which was badly replaced in peace time.

During the brief Derby ministry in the later 1850s, Albert had proposed that an architect be admired, George Gilbert Scott, design the projected Foreign Office. Scott returned with plans in the neo-Gothic style then dominant, but Palmerston returned to Downing Street and turned Scott's conception down in favour of Regency neoclassicism.

With the Prince's support, Scott took his rejected drawings to the directors of the Midland Railway, friends of Albert's since their collaboration on the Great Exhibition of 1851. The building materialised as St Pancras Railway Station, now considered one of the glories of mid-Victorian architecture. Victoria would choose Scott to design and oversee the memorial to her husband. One assumes that his shade would have approved.

Centrepiece of the structure is John Foley's monumental seated statue of Albert in his Garter robes. In 1853, tales surfaced that Albert's admirers were lobbying for a statue of the Prince in Hyde Park on the former site of the Crystal Palace, which had been dismantled and moved across the Thames to Sydenham. Rumour had it that statues of George III and George IV, and the pillar memorialising the little-lamented Duke of York, like George IV an uncle to both Victoria and Albert, would be melted down for their bronze. *Punch* published a satirical cartoon.

Embarrassed, the Prince denied aspirations to be a statue in Hyde Park or any other public place, writing to Lord Granville on 3 November 1853 that he could say, "with perfect absence of humbug", that it would disturb his rides in the park "to see my own face staring at me", and, if it was "an artistic monstrosity, like most of our monuments", it would

upset him "to be permanently ridiculed and laughed at in effigy".

Had he privately downplayed his royal role, preferring to subsume himself in the Queen's service and taking on only those responsibilities which did not interfere with being, in effect, her executive assistant. Albert turned down Wellington's quite serious offer that he become the Duke's successor as commander-in-chief of the Army, yet he entered and won a contested election for Chancellor of Cambridge in order to reform the medieval curriculum and help thrust a reluctant university into the 19th century. So, too, when little more than 30, he took on the Great Exhibition, turning it into the first World's Fair and focusing it upon science and industry so successfully that it turned a profit and provided the impetus - and substantial funding - for the great complex of museums, colleges, institutes and concert halls in South Kensington first derided by sceptics as "Albertopolis".

Under the ornate friezed canopy, the Prince, in gilded bronze, holds one of the volumes of the exhibition catalogue in his right hand, his forefinger tucked between its pages to suggest that he was serious about it. He had, in life, even checked to see that each object displayed was correctly labelled.

Despite his deplored monuments to himself, Albert would have been pleased to be memorialised for what he did rather than who he was.

Stanley Weintraub is the author of *Albert, Uncrowned King* (John Murray, £15.99).



THE INDEPENDENT ARCHIVE

23 SEPTEMBER 1989

John Windsor reports on the bibulousness and high jinks of international corkscrew week

are receiving them, and Brighton Pavilion is lending its banqueting room. There will be dinners in members' homes. It will be a time for bibulous but elegant high jinks.

Corkscrews may be humble implements, but their collectors are a cut or two above the bicycle-clip brigade. The ICCA was founded in 1974 by Dr Bernard Watney, author of *Corkscrews for Collectors* - the collectors' "bible". The cork screw group's enduring combination of sound scholarship and quaint customs would disgrace neither an Oxbridge dining club nor an arcane ancient order. Members - half Americans, and the rest mainly Europeans - include physicians, estate agents, lawyers, accountants, company directors, engineers and retired hospital porters turned game-beater to the nobility.

There is no president. Instead, there is a Right. It was the American senator Henry Clay who in 1850, you will recall, said: "Sir, I would rather be right than be President."

Tomorrow night at the Addicts' annual dinner, the current Right, Richard Dennis, a Kens-

ington antique dealer, will offer the toasts inscribed on a specially commissioned ceramic punchbowl, inspired by those of 18th-century dining clubs: "The bottlescrew whose worth, whose use, all men confess that love the juice" (anon English poem, 1732) and *In spira tanon* (1741).

By tradition, no Addict is allowed to leave the table until the bowl is empty. Six litres may not sound a lot; the catch is that the Master of the Punch is allowed to fill the bowl with his own recipe as many times as he likes.

For the over-indulged, the Addicts' chaplain will be at hand. Brother Timothy Diener, a founder member, is a retired cellar-master of the Christian Brothers of Napa Valley, California. His florid pre-dinner graces giving thanks for God's gift of the grape and yeast are designed to test the patience of the most recalcitrant taste-buds. His pastoral obligations are made more poignant by the fact that he is the donor of the wine for the Christie's and Sotheby's receptions.

The finale is a dinner at the Right's house in Shepton Mallet, Somerset, and a return coach trip via Stonehenge. The last time this was attempted, according to ICCA records, few Addicts clapped eyes on the stones, being by that time "in a soporific trance".

The entire juncture, including forays to antique markets and an AGM at the Reform Club, costs a mere £120, not counting hotel accommodation. No wonder supplicants are keenly vetted.

From the Weekend section of "The Independent", Saturday 23 September 1989

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE
callibogus, n.

Coke, "which was becoming a Beatie drink even then". Precise as Epstein's voice was, he does not make it clear whether this was

some deadly threefold cocktail or two separate drinks. Whatever, some of us continue to prefer *callibogus*. Unknown over here, it is a word for a combination which makes something palatable from those otherwise grim ingredients, rum and American beer. Had they done so, they might not have bothered with pot and LSD.

Move over, Calvin

Thanks to Helmut Lang, some of New York's leading designers have already shown next summer's trends on the catwalk. Or have they? By Melanie Rickey

Nobody is embracing the new long skirts and flat shoes look in New York City. It's far too sultry and smoggy. Instead, the world's most powerful fashion editors (with the exception of eccentric doyenne Polly Mellen of *Allure*, whose Marc Jacobs shoes are so dainty and flat they appear to be drawn on to her feet) are still wearing their summer clothes and sandals and talking about their holidays. It is unprecedented. No, not the weather and the clothes, but the fact that this is New York, in September, and the fashion editors are gathered for fashion shows, although one would be mistaken for thinking it was an up-market cocktail party. "I was in Morocco, kiss, kiss, you?", "How was Fire Island?", "You look so well darling" etc.

Traditionally, New York Fashion Week takes place in November after the hectic London, Milan and Paris shows. And take place it will, but without two of its stinkiest stars: Calvin Klein and Donna Karan. It is all because Helmut Lang, the reclusive Austrian urban minimalist who decamped to New York last year (allegedly for love), decided that he wanted to show his collection before everyone else at the risk of upsetting the applecart - and he did. In the process he caused a fashion revolution. Not only did he create a new role for himself as one of the most influential designers in the world both fashion- and business-wise, but Calvin and Donna followed hot on his heels. They ended up staging a mini fashion week which worked so well that next season New York will kick off the international collections, instead of being last.

Calvin Klein's representative Robert Treifus says: "It is purely business. It just doesn't make sense to show the collection in November when we've already sold it in Milan. Helmut Lang did the right thing." Those who know better say Lang did not want to show after his former Parisian contemporaries (he showed for eight years in Paris) in case he was seen to be copying them, a charge often levelled at the Americans. But Lang has always, and will continue to bang his own drum, and having his show early simply means he will have longer to sell it and produce the collection.

London's own Alexander McQueen, in New York last week to be honoured at the 15th annual "Night of Stars" as one of fashion's "individualists" alongside Miuccia Prada, told industry bible *Women's Wear Daily*: "The proof is in the pudding, to see what they can come up with before Milan and Paris." That's what everyone else is saying, but there was no denying that the clothes shown last week were very desirable, and will sell and sell. This is something that makes Americans very happy - Kate Beets, fashion news director of the mighty American *Vogue* more so than most. "People will look at New York fashion in the fresh way it deserves now, not as a way to fill in the blanks after a long and tiring season of shows."

Indeed New York is a powerful, slick and commercial animal; the clothes shown on catwalks and worn on the street are wearable, uncomplicated, and very, very smart. In New York fashion boutiques, it is common for a well-groomed woman (they are always well groomed), when confronted with a drawstring or a drape, to ask: "How do I wear this?" Really. But they are learning, and will learn more as their native designers and Helmut Lang get to grips with their wardrobes, and slowly add edge European details to the commercial pieces: an oddly placed zipper to accentuate the hip drape on a jersey dress (Calvin Klein), an ornately tucked and draped light-as-a-cloud blue tulle and organza shift dress (Donna Karan), or a hot-pink ruched organza vest-dress, layered over a white vest-dress printed with a subtle, urban camouflage (Helmut Lang).

These are summer collections, after all, and what better way to feel summery than to explode colour on to the catwalk, which undoubtedly was the biggest trend "message" last week in New York. Full-blown orange, grass green, aquamarine, black, low, aubergine and raspberry at Calvin Klein were flung together on sheer jersey tops, knee-skirts, long fluid crêpe de Chine, and split jersey dresses with elongated armholes, some worn on top of each other to get the maximum colourful effect. Donna Karan took the same approach for DKNY a few days earlier offering bubblegum-bright double-layered shirts, simple slash neck T-shirts, and her new range of un-

derwear. For her womanly main line, however she took the subtle approach with a beautiful collection that was called rather cornily "The Lightness of Being". When the last burrals died down the title did have some relevance. The clothes were as light as air and in the most part the silhouette was somewhat reminiscent of Yohji Yamamoto's early Eighties offerings: low-slung, elasticated-waist, puffy puffed taffeta skirts and cotton dirdls were worn with off-the-shoulder fine cotton jumpers over white vests; too-long cashmere T-shirts were hiked up around the hips, and trousers

were cropped to mid-calf. Mixed in were laser tailoring so sharp and precise it did not need hemming.

The colours and the fabrics made this collection shine. Buff, nude, bone, parchment, rose - no neoprene was left uneaten in washed taffeta, crisp cotton and soft cashmere. Texture was all, but it did leave the question: what will the black pack do? A-ha! A small note at the end of the show blurb reveals "quintessentially, it all comes in black".

Which leaves Helmut Lang. The man of the week; the reason every-

one was there in the first place. Tanned and happy after a summer break and cool as a cucumber before his show, he hid just out of sight backstage as his guests arrived.

Every now and then his hand would pop out, beckoning a friend who would be welcomed to his sanctum for a moment. One got the feeling he was loving every minute, and why not? The show was a perfect Lang experience. Urban, simple in silhouette, and approachable without losing any of the cool factor. These clothes said "you want to wear me". Indeed some of them looked like they had been worn extensively before their outing, and that, too, is part of the Lang charm. These are city clothes for city people, and what better place to show them than in New York, the ultimate urban environment?

There was the key trouser: flat-fronted, long and slim, some with motorcycle padding at the knee in aged silver leather or black and cream cotton, and worn with utilitarian money belts around the waist or clipped to the upper arm. The vest (or tank) was another key item. It turned up sheer in white and black, opaque in nude and soft beige, others in white cotton had asymmetric

drapes across the chest and, of course, there were the hot pink dresses, some with matching sheer tights worn with high heels, the fluffy beige car-coats, the green parkas, the slim skirts, and the paint-splattered jeans.

As the show ended and the crowd clapped, something became apparent; on the pared-down programme notes, about 10 lines of typed text said: "Underwear; men's shoes, bags, accessories; jeans, clothes, all Helmut Lang." He might be reclusive, but he's got big ideas. I'd put my money on Mr Lang becoming the Calvin Klein of the new millennium.

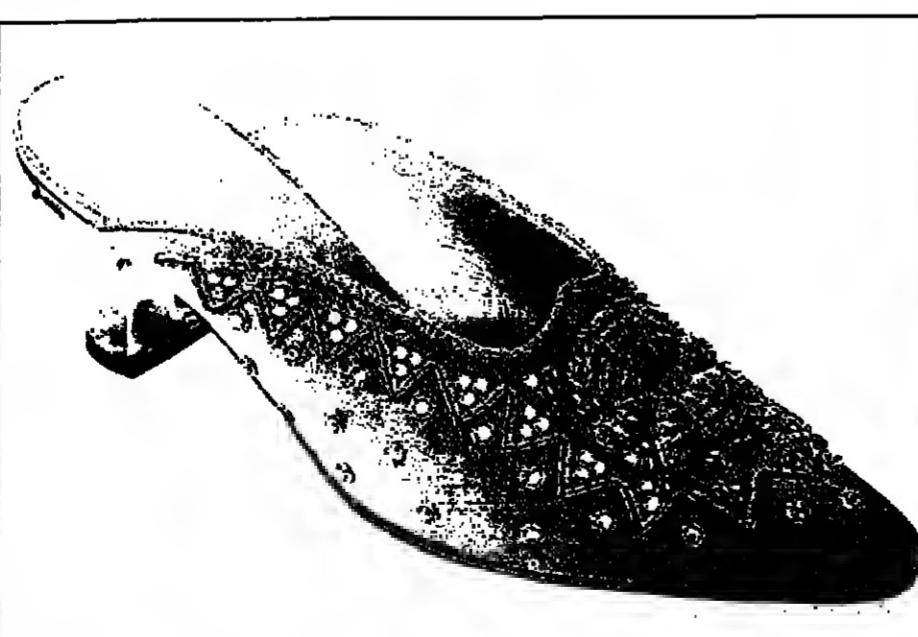
I would go to the ball, if only I could afford the shoes

What you need is a Prince Charming, says Tony Glenville

AS DUSK settled over the Ponte Vecchio in Florence on Friday night, the limousines pulled up at the doors of Palazzo Corsini. The rustle of taffeta and the nervous twisting of bow ties announced the Cinderella ball, the high spot of a weekend to launch *Ever After: A Cinderella Story*, the movie starring Drew Barrymore and due to be released here in October.

It is not often that Florence steals the limelight from New York, Paris, Milan or London, but for one weekend it became the centre of the fashion universe. The fashion pack flew in, eager not only to attend the film's premiere and the ball - Drew Barrymore wore a Ferragamo dress made out of silk "rags" for the premiere and then a sparkling gown for the ball - but also to take a look at the second fashion biennale which includes installations by Antonio Berardi, Alexander McQueen and Comme des Garçons. The theme, appropriately, is film and fashion. The first biennale held in Florence two years ago, was about art and fashion.

Valentino paid tribute to Visconti's film *The Leopard* with a room full of ballgowns. Tom Ford, the designer-in-chief at Gucci, was inspired by the movie *The Tenth Victim* with sunglasses and guns. It was the ball however, that was the highlight of the weekend. At Palazzo Corsini, Angelica Houston



The Princess slipper as designed by Ferragamo for the new 'Cinderella' film

drifted in grey tulle by Valentino. Björk wore a white leather and gold lame number by the American designer in Paris, Jeremy Scott. And Megs Dodds wore Ungaro.

But what of the glass slippers? By midnight, the ice sculptures of Cinderella's slippers had melted into the darkness. In the film, the slippers are given centre stage. Ferragamo has

foot, you see the slipper being manufactured on the silver screen. It was commissioned over a year ago, and is based on an antique shoe at the Ferragamo shoe museum. A tiny smile with a crystal heel, it really is a Cinderella slipper. And just as Cinders got to go to the ball, so you too can own your own Cinderella.

The kind people at Ferragamo have put a replica of the shoe into production. It has been named the Princess, pre-

fashion

If it's not in, it's out.
Obviously.

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The strange beauty of wreckage

Josef Koudelka
photographed
Soviet tanks and
Czech theatre.
His vision was to
transform them
both. By Rachel
Halliburton

The old man hunched before the backdrop riddled with bullet-holes says more about desolation than any words could. One shoulder slumps lower than the other, while his sunken cheeks sag on a face scarred with detection. It is impossible to see his eyes – it is as if they, like the windows behind him, have been blown in as a result of the violence.

Tanks and guns have raped him and his surroundings of any meaningful existence; now – like so many others in war-zones across the world – he is a corpse just waiting to happen. The photographer Josef Koudelka took the old man's photograph shortly after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. It was an image that was to become famous worldwide, proclaiming the photographer as a key witness to Russia's clampdown on Prague's increasingly liberalised socialism by sending the tanks in.

Koudelka was forced to remain anonymous at the time – but today in the Czech Republic his pictures remain, for many, potent symbols of Czech feeling immediately after the invasion. In one photograph, a youth bares his chest to a Russian tank, daring the soldiers to shoot him down. In another – shot seconds beforehand – two young Czech men triumphantly hold their flag above a street awash with the rubble and emptiness left by tanks that have gone before them.

These unblinking portrayals of human hardship form a small but significant part of the exhibition of Koudelka's work, "From Behind the Iron Curtain", currently on display in the Lyttelton foyer at the National Theatre. The rest of the exhibition lifts the curtain on photos Koudelka took of theatrical productions in Prague before communism crushed the theatres into silence in 1972. These pictures have never been exhibited in the West before.

To Westerners it may appear to be a strange juxtaposition – combining the harsh realities of the So-



The image that announced a key witness to the Soviet invasion of Prague, 1968. Right, a scene from of Chekhov's *Ivanov*

viet invasion with dramas made more trivial by the fact that they can be washed away at the end of the evening with the greasepaint. In fact, it is only by working out the links between the two sections of the exhibition that viewers will be able to get to the heart of what Koudelka's work really is about.

A simplistic conclusion might be that because censorship played such a significant part in Soviet oppression, the link between these two sections is rooted in politics. Put this to Koudelka, however, and he dismisses this as too pat. The grizzled, slightly mischievous-looking photographer huddles over a cup of tea and starts to explain.

"I did not hate the Russian soldiers who were there in 1968 – I felt sorry for them. I was part of the

same system – I could have been sitting one night somewhere on a tank in Warsaw or Budapest," he says. "These pictures are about a foreign army entering a country, and the way people there reacted to it."

It is only after looking more carefully at Koudelka's photographs of 1968 that it is possible to see that his words are an affirmation of their enduring qualities. It becomes clear, for example, after standing in front of these pictures of the old man for some time, that Koudelka's lens has a transformative power, which translates the image from the figurative to the symbolic. The man becomes far more than an individual standing in a street in Prague – instead, the emotions he is expressing elevate him into a symbol for desolation, which could be as relevant in the former Yugoslavia or in Northern Ireland, as in Prague.

Koudelka is emphatic that it is this kind of universality he is aiming for, and that any attempts by people to say his work is political is to miss the point. He explains: "I was never involved in politics. I think the best pictures I took were those where it is not important if the soldier is Russian, Czech, or American."

"The point is that one person has a gun, and the other doesn't."

Ironically, while the pictures shot in the streets of Prague have the emotional complexity of a five-act tragedy, Koudelka's photographs of the theatre – which are also black and white – seem initially to rob them of their dramatic meaning. Koudelka took these strikingly original photos at the Theatre on the

Balustrade and the Theatre Behind the Gate in Prague.

Again, Koudelka's lens transforms, but in his most extreme photos the actors become more like a series of abstract forms than symbols – a dynamic composition of curves, lines, and irregular shapes which allows them to achieve another kind of universality.

In this way, King Ubu in jail becomes a jostling assortment of black and white stripes, while one of the actresses being cast for Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, looks less like a human than a gorgon, as her neck strains forward, and her spiky hair reaches towards the picture frame.

"One actor who came to the exhibition in Prague said: 'You know, you didn't photograph the theatre, you photographed the spirit of the

Josef Koudelka/Magnum

theatre,'" Koudelka remembers.

Koudelka's greatest power lies in drawing beauty from the devastated and the dispossessed. In the Eighties he won further acclaim for his collection of photographs entitled *Exiles* and in a new collection of his photos, called *Chaos, Beirut and the former Yugoslavia* will provide some of the backdrops to his images of human and material wreckage.

He claims no fixed nationality – he lives in France, and says he does not have a Czech identity. It is perhaps a strong indication of his feeling of exile that he says at the end of the interview:

"I'm not really looking forward to the opening of my exhibition – it makes me nervous. In the past, the only Czechs who used to come were the secret police."



From Behind the Iron Curtain' is at the Lyttelton foyer, RNT, London SE1. 'Chaos' will be published by Nathan; 'Exiles', revised edition, is published by Thames and Hudson, price £32

A timeless movement

CLASSICAL

ROBERT SIMPSON
MEMORIAL CONCERT
ST JOHN'S, SMITH SQUARE
LONDON

WHEN ROBERT Simpson died last November, with 11 symphonies, 15 string quartets and a host of other substantial works to his credit, he left a substantial gap in Britain's musical life behind him. He had been the country's musical conscience: an emphatic radical himself, in his broadcasts and writings Simpson held the modern age to account.

As each wave of watery fashion washed over a credulous musical establishment, he furthered the values he held important – not least the power of tonality to generate energy and momentum. But his own music – as important as anything being composed here – he would not push, and it was to do some pushing on its behalf that the Robert Simpson Society was formed in 1980. The resultant series of recordings, on the Hyperion label, has made Simpson's name a byword for musical honesty around the world.

Simpson left his body to medical science. So the concert organised by

passions, astrology: it was commissioned in memory of the astronomer Sir James Jeans.

That sense of size, of the pull of large forces informed almost everything Simpson wrote, and something of the elemental calm he could achieve informed the richly rumitative *Adagio* by Matthew Taylor.

Taylor is one of many young composers who admit the importance of Simpson's example, and this *Adagio* is an explicit tribute, an unselfish reminiscence of the timeless slow movements at the heart of many of Simpson's own quartets.

Both works were performed by the Delme Quartet, whose playing Simpson always treasured.

Simpson's Seventh Quartet, written in 1977, uses the slow-fast-slow arch-form that he particularly favoured, with long, intertwining lines that gradually surge into a passionate climax before spiralling slowly into space.

The Violin Sonata, commissioned in 1984 by Pauline Lowbury and Christopher Green-Armstrong and played by them here with patent con-

vinction, uses variation in its second movement to build a linked slow movement, scherzo and fugal finale, informed by the grim humour typical of Simpson the man. He took the same unity-through-diversity approach in the *Variations and Finale on a Theme of Beethoven*, composed in 1980 for Raymond Clarke, who performed it here.

Simpson's piano writing is not particularly idiomatic; he seems to have the music from the instrument, and Clarke projected its fierce energy with genuine excitement.

The gathering was predominantly one of Simpson's friends, on both sides of the platform, with the artists giving their services for the occasion. It says much for the respect he commanded that the Vaughn Williams Quartet made the long journey from Ireland to play. Their luminous reading of Beethoven's Tenth Quartet, "The Harp", on 74, would have brought him much pleasure.

MARTIN ANDERSON

The loser's a winner

COMEDY

LEE EVANS
APOLLO THEATRE
LONDON



and a satellite dish on the front."

The two-and-a-quarter-hour show had its longeurs and there was more discussion of bodily functions than in the entire Starr report. Evans admitted that routines about shopping and flatulence are hardly going to topple the Government. "It's not about anything," he shrugged. "I don't come on and say 'We should march on Buckingham Palace'."

But you have to admire a man who puts so much into being a dork. Within minutes of taking the stage last night, he was sweating so much he was delighted when someone threw him a towel.

Clowns are frequently tragically unfunny, but you get more energy and entertainment from one inspired Lee Evans mime than from a whole big top full of men with red noses. Mesmerising manic, mad, he is a one-man confederacy of dunces.

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OPERA

JENŮFA
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KATIE MITCHELL's staging of *Jenůfa* is Welsh National Opera's first nod into the old Pountney/Bjørnson Janácek cycle, the most durable of which, *The House of the Dead*, was revived as recently as last summer. There is no drastic reassessment: *Jenůfa* is still a psychologically acute study of love struggling to adjust to a world where the old social and moral certainties are disintegrating. But the focus is new, sharp and sometimes provocative. Fresh from Chekhov, Mitchell scraps the village green elements of the action and moves it indoors. The world looks in (occasionally bursts in) through doors and windows but, like the village girls at *Jenůfa's* wedding, it is uninvited and bodes no good.

It's mental release is one too few. But the portraiture is so vivid, and above all so musical, that one can forget the odd vulgarism. The key lies in Mitchell's idea of a far-from-youthful *Laca*, and a gauchely virile *Steva*: the inward and the outward starkly contrasted in another way. Nigel Robson makes much of *Laca*'s spiritual refinement within an unpossessing frame, while John Daszak lumbers around incomprehendingly as *Steva*. Both are excellent.

I'm less convinced by Suzanne Murphy's *Kosteincika*, for some reason bourgeoisified in dress, and only intermittently tortured in presence. Her singing too, is patchy, though strong in the final scene. Rosalind Sutherland's *Jenůfa* is problematical

for rather different reasons. The voice is exquisite but the manner slightly dim, though she is very touching in the crucial scenes with *Laca*. Alas, she is often drowned in the lower regions by Daniel Harding's committed but sometimes unrestrained handling of Janácek's awkward balances. It's a fault this young conductor ought to address, because the feeling of his *Janácek* is superb – full of colour and emotional energy, but always inaccurately paced, and for the most part incisively executed.

In Cardiff until 30 September (01222 875889), then on tour to Oxford, Swansea, Southampton, Birmingham, Bristol and Liverpool. Further details 01222 454565 STEPHEN WALSH

It's al

And now for the drama of the century

The National Theatre is doing its millennial stocktake. What are the most significant plays? And what does significant mean anyway, asks David Benedict

Very late in the day someone spotted the double meaning in the suggested name of a new foodstuff in development, which meant we never got to eat Birds Eye Crispy Cod Pieces. Similarly, some bright spark at the Barbican saved the day by spotting that the initials of the putative title for its international theatre festival, Pre-Millennium Theatre, was asking for trouble.

Beneath the branding, the Barbican is only indulging in what virtually every other cultural institution and certainly every conceivable branch of the media is doing. We are up to our eyes in millennial stock-taking, succumbing to *fin-de-siècle* fever. Portentious lists of 'The Century's Best' are being busily compiled and the latest contender in the ring is the National Theatre which has launched NT2000, a celebration of the most "significant" plays of the century. The deadline for submissions is now past and all we have to do is wait for the results of the poll of 800 writers, actors, directors, designers, academics, administrators, critics, commentators and politicians who have been asked to cite 10 plays and, in an echo of *Desert Island Discs*, to answer the question: "And if you could only have one..."

The most important question in such compilations is not which work comes out on top, but rather how do you define your terms? As with all surveys and statistical pile-ups, the truth lies in the methodology. The National initially sets out its stall very strictly. The plays must be written in English or translated by the author. That means we can pick works Beckett originally wrote in French but not Chekhov's masterpiece *The Cherry Orchard* which for many, myself included, is the play of the century.

It also banishes Brecht and Pirandello, without whom acres of the dramatic repertoire of the second half of the century would have

been inconceivable up to and including Stephen Sondheim. Sondheim has often announced his dislike of Brecht but the interplay of distance and emotional engagement in his own work is completely indebted to Brechtian techniques.

Not that Sondheim's work is up for consideration. Musicals have been barred. This is largely due to practical reasons, as the votes cast will result in a list of 100 plays being presented in a year-long series of 45-minute platform events, each one highlighted with discussions and excerpts. Presenting musicals in this fashion is impossibly expensive and you are faced with the problem of collaboration. In the majority of cases it is the music which makes them great, which means landing composers rather than writers.

Clearly, the intended emphasis is on dramatic literature. Unfortunately, the National then muddies the waters. Recognising the sub-

direction and text, this opens the door to hugely enjoyable productions of second-rate plays in which, say, a stellar performance blinded audiences to weaknesses in the writing (Judi Dench in *Amys View*), which is surely missing the point. Of course the yardstick of enjoyment is important but it panders dangerously to the intellectually lazy notion that "what I like" is the same as "what is good". Whatever happened to objectivity? Thus critical rigour goes out the window and the term "significant" is reduced to a state of meaninglessness.

Yet even if one adheres strictly to the criterion of "significance", what does that mean? The National suggests that the word be used in the sense of "great, influential or important". Larry Kramer's AIDS clarion call *The Normal Heart* was massively significant in social and political terms but although it made for powerful theatre, by no stretch of the imagination is it a great play.

It is more useful to see "influence" as applying to not only the imagination and emotions of audiences but to the evolution of theatre itself. This means that John Osborne's *Loot Back in Anger* is a dead-cert for inclusion. The first "kitchen sink drama", it sent shock-waves through the theatrical establishment in 1956.

Revivals have revealed, however, that although the writing for the central character Jimmy Porter created a massively influential new voice in every sense, the play as a whole is unbalanced, overwritten, misogynist and deeply sentimental.

Nor is it Osborne's best, a point which leads us to the crux of the matter. Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is, without doubt, the century's single most influential play. It redefined almost every rule or plot, character and structure but it was just the beginning of Beckett's journey. His compelling syntheses of theatrical image and metaphor grew purer and more intensely dramatic as his career progressed. Play

1963), *Not I* (1973), and *Footfalls* (1976), to name but three, are more dramatically distilled works. It is the same story with Harold Pinter. His first full-length play *The Birthday Party* (a miserable flop in 1958) heralded a sea-change in the construction of dialogue and the rendering of theatrical "realism", and that is just for starters. It was early days for a talent that flowered further with *The Homecoming* (1965) and reached maturity with the fully achieved and astonishingly fluid *Old Times* (1971) or the magnificent *Betrayal* (1978).

The game would be altogether easier if one were being asked to name the century's greatest playwrights, about whom there is surprisingly little dissension. The problem here is that greatness, removed from the excitement of fashion, needs time to reveal itself. The closer one gets to the present, the harder it is to assess the importance and resonance of a particular play. With a dead playwright, all one has to do is to select the finest, most mature expression of his or her ambition and achievement, but the untested nature of recent judgements means that younger writers get a raw deal. Tony Kushner's *An Angels in America* or Phyllis Nagy's *Never Land* may turn out to be massively influential, but who can tell? The final problem is partial

knowledge. All sorts of circumstances lead one to describe a play as so-and-so's best, not least of which is having seen key works in either good or bad productions. My favourite David Mamet play is *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* but deep down I know that *American Buffalo* is better but unlike the for-

As with sex surveys, some people will undoubtedly select plays that put themselves in a good light

leagues. So with my apologies to ghastly omissions like Bernard Shaw, Terence Rattigan, Edward Albee, Joe Orton, David Mamet and all your favourites, here is my utterly impartial list in chronological order:

Private Lives (1930): Noel Coward's most perfectly constructed play. A bewitching marital comedy of passion and denial whose surface laughter is built upon extraordinary emotional depth.

A Long Day's Journey Into Night (1940): Eugene O'Neill's self-lacerating family drama has a unique rhythm and a compelling cumulative power.

A Streetcar Named Desire (1947): Tennessee Williams's vividly atmospheric, lyrical masterpiece.

The Crucible (1953): Arthur Miller's flawed but dramatically gripping allegory of McCarthyism set during the Salem witch-trials.

Racing Demon (1990): David Hare's masterpiece is a superbly layered state-of-the-nation play using plots within the Church of England hierarchy to illuminate ideas of faith with a rare breadth of sympathy.

And, finally, my play of the century:

Top Girls (1982): Caryl Churchill's stunningly moving study of the enticements of power and the contradictions we are forced to face was groundbreaking in its reworking of the basic dramatic rules governing time, manner and place. It was also utterly alive to the world in which she was writing and remains so today.

It's all lies, cries Barbara Windsor

THE NATIONAL under Trevor Nunn seems to be going through something of an identity crisis. It thinks it's a cinema complex. Over on Screen One, there's *Okahoma!* Now the Lyttelton's proscenium arch, which also plays host to Fiona Shaw's larger-than-life Miss Jean Brodie, has been tarted up at the Odeon big screen that taste never knew: an imposing art-deco facade bathed in an orangey fake-tan glow, framing the ruched curtain of your worst nightmares.

When that curtain rises on Terry Johnson's gag-packed *Carry On* pastiche *Cleo, Camping, Emmanuelle and Dick*, we are treated to mock credits, beginning with the full-bodied attack on the trademark Rank gong, followed by a juddering succession of garish celluloid images that abruptly melts in flames. It sets

THEATRE CLEO, CAMPING, EMMANUELLE AND DICK NATIONAL THEATRE, LONDON

feel is predominantly *Carry On Camping*, the scenes being almost entirely confined to a cross-section of James' "Merry Traveller" trail, which hogs the stage throughout with a precarious humanness.

The cramped conditions help

create a pervading sense of entombed, fetiche talent, but Johnson, who directs, has no problem utilising every inch of space for the kind of farcical comingings and goings that are his meat and veg (he directed a rompy version of the Restoration comedy *The London Cuckolds* at the Lyttelton earlier in the year). This is a behind-the-scenes world in

which the focus is ever on self-display. Into the nooks and crannies of El Sid's rocking caravan of love are huddled as many women as he can lay his hands on.

Not surprisingly, the trailer rambles with Kenneth Williams, who delivers his opinion the minute he sets a Roman-sandal foot inside: "I am outraged! This takes the biscuit. And not just any biscuit. I'm talking McVities plain chocolate digestives slightly melted and stuck together in threes." Adam Godley captures the withering exuberance and nasal hauteur of Williams perfectly, aided by a script that teems with caustic comments and the kind of fifth-rate double entendres the wag couldn't resist.

Johnson has him locked into

Geoffrey Hutchings, who looks and sounds the spit, down in the croaky laugh and squinty eyes). "You've never suffered the abject, creeping horror of an ailing anus!" the latter is told. No, but he does suffer as intensely as Williams the hollowness of a comic actor running out of time and popular favour. Just as Samantha Spiro's Barbara (so good you wonder whether she is a replicant) can only inspect Williams's anus from afar, so she has to keep her distance from a lover for whom there can be no rescue.

"It's all lies!" I heard the real Barbara Windsor giggle during the opening night. Taken in context, that was a real compliment.

In rep at the Lyttelton Theatre, London, SE1 (0171-452 3000)

DOMINIC CAVENDISH



Geoffrey Hutchings plays Sid James

Geraint Lewis

CLASSIFIED

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Dated 10th September 1998

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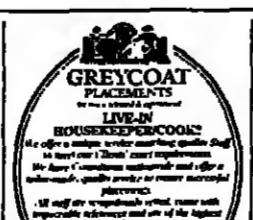
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ON THE FRINGE

DOMINIC CAVENDISH

THIS WEEK has seen the UK premiere of the first play written by an American and presented at a professional theatre. It has taken us a staggering 211 years to stage Royall Tyler's *The Contrast*.

The fact that this comedy of manners is so little known to us might be adduced to its lack of artistic merit and/or the vagueness surrounding its status as a dramatic "first": after all, a glance at a reference book tells us that the first play performed in English-speaking America was *The Bear and the Cub*, in Virginia in 1665, and that many other plays were penned prior to the War of Independence.

What Upstart Crow's eminently watchable production suggests is that, if *The Contrast* has been overlooked over here, it is not because it is a poor endeavour, but because it is so markedly an endeavour.

Rather than putting his name to it, Tyler, a lawyer and his

soldier, attributed it to "A citizen of the United States" and the work is a tentative fathoming out of what it might mean to such a citizen. He also follows a British model while attempting to turn away from it.

The contrast alluded to in the title soon emerges, is between two kinds of citizen: one who affects European airs and graces, and another whose relative lack of sophistication is compensated for by a nobility of spirit. The former is the popish, Chesterfield-quoting Dimpie (Matthew Nixon), a depraved wretch, whose only virtue is a polished exterior.

He is attempting to break off his engagement to Maria by making advances towards two coquettish friends, Letitia and Charlotte. The latter's brother, Jonathan, is the butt of many a jibe, but ultimately prove their mettle.

A stack of tapes provides the only furniture other than a table and two chairs. With the

arrival of the waiter and, then, the manager of the restaurant upstairs, offering him a free meal to compensate for noise, things turn extremely sour.

Parker soon finds himself stripped naked, bound and gagged, and awaiting unspeakable acts of torture. This is a nasty piece of work, which never quite stops feeling school of Pinter, and structurally it crumples unsatisfactorily in the second half. But insouciant performances (particularly from John O'Byrne's terminally bored serial killer) bring out the remorselessness of Green's dialogue which conjures up clubbable, get-ahead males and the powerlessness of those who lead dreamy, independent lives.

The Contrast, The Cochrane, WC1 (0171-242 7040) To 17 Oct; *Her Alabaster Skin*, White Bear, London, SE11 (0171-793 9193) To 4 Oct



Top-ten contender: Noel Coward and Gertrude Lawrence in 'Private Lives' (1930)

Mander and Mitchison

Not I (1973): Samuel Beckett's searingly beautiful depiction of humanity through the mouth of a woman. A truly unforgettable piece of dramatic writing

The Norman Conquests (1973): Alan Ayckbourn's brilliantly interwoven comic trilogy grows in depth and complexity before your very eyes, is minutely observed and, frankly, hilarious.

Betrayal (1979): Harold Pinter's elegiac story of a love triangle played in reverse is so assured that even people who think they don't like or "get" Pinter fall under its heart-breaking spell.

Racing Demon (1990): David Hare's masterpiece is a superbly layered state-of-the-nation play using plots within the Church of England hierarchy to illuminate ideas of faith with a rare breadth of sympathy.

And, finally, my play of the century:

Lords of the manna

Some freehold property owners are not giving tenants the best deals in buildings insurance because they are earning attractive commissions. By Karen Woolfson

Some freehold landlords are making sizeable profits from arranging buildings insurance for properties. The deal involves creating a structure that allows them to receive commission for placing their insurance policies and charging higher than necessary prices to leaseholders to finance the deal.

The landlord may then be tempted to place the business with a company offering the highest commission rather than the one that offers the best policy at the most reasonable price.

The more leasehold properties a freeholder controls, the more scope there is to take advantage of the system. The freeholder typically sets up an insurance broking company to arrange wholesale cover for all his properties. The landlord will receive commission for arranging the cover via the broking company.

Leaseholders therefore end up paying much more for buildings insurance than they would as individuals on the open market. Moreover, the charge for insurance should decrease the more flats that are being covered because buying in bulk normally pushes down the cost.

Paul Pritchard, of the Freshwater Lessees Alliance (Fleas), which has more than 1,500 members, says their landlord, the Freshwater Group, has been challenged about the high amount charged for insurance through Hightown, the broker it owns and which acts for it.

Ed Elliott, another committee member of Fleas, who lives in Birmingham and Windsor Courts, London, alleges: "Freshwater admitted in February Hightown is receiving 30 per cent commission on the buildings insurance. All it takes is a couple of phone calls to arrange insurance and if there is any commission it should be returned to leaseholders."

Mr Elliott ensured that the original insurance estimate of £41,866 presented by Freshwater to 90 leasehold flats in 1996 was reduced to £16,376 by coming up with some competitive quotes. "That's a staggering difference of £25,490," he said.

"Even after that incredible reduction, the sum charged was £3,838 more than the amount quoted by an alternative insurance company. This year we'll be demanding Freshwater shops around for the best deal and rebates at least 75 per cent of any commission received to leaseholders."

Terence Michael, a leaseholder in Kensington, west London, says: "The law is not tough enough and some landlords are finding the opportunity to make a special arrangement with an insurer irresistible." He wants all insurance deals to be completely independent of the landlord and stresses this should also apply to relationships with solicitors, accountants, surveyors and any other company or person connected with the management of the property.

"Some landlords just don't bother choosing the best deal. Leaseholders paying out the money are not being given any choice about where

'Some landlords just don't bother choosing the best deal. Leaseholders paying out the money are not being given any choice'

the insurance business is being placed and end up with a poor deal. In a number of cases, leaseholders have found insurance cover for less money and plan to challenge their landlords through a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal," he said.

Robert Hadden, group solicitor at Freshwater, defends the company from allegations that its insurance charges are too high. He said: "Our objective is to ensure that the number of insurance companies with which we deal with is sufficient to maintain healthy competition. It is not in our lessees' interest to accept loss-leading quotes, which would inevitably lead to disputes over claims and higher charges over the long-term."

Mr Hadden says that Hightown's commission earnings are in line with the market and the 30-per-cent figure quoted "well within the range of what might generally be expected". The current commission rate is now 20 per cent. This sum is payment for Hightown's "complex" work in insuring the Freshwater blocks, plus dealing with claims and inquiries from lessees. The company does not charge a second fee to leaseholders for its activities.

He adds that when Freshwater produced its estimate for the cost of insurance for 1996/97, the sum of £41,866 was arrived at by taking the previous year's sum and assuming a 7-per-cent "uplift". The £16,376 figure was not comparable because it did not, unlike the original quote, include engineering and terrorism insurance. However, Mr Elliott, from the Fleas committee, claims the final quotes for terrorism and engineering cover were £253 and £1,913 respectively which, even if added to the new £16,376 total, were still much lower than the original estimate. In the event, the bill for the general insurance element came in even lower at £15,253.

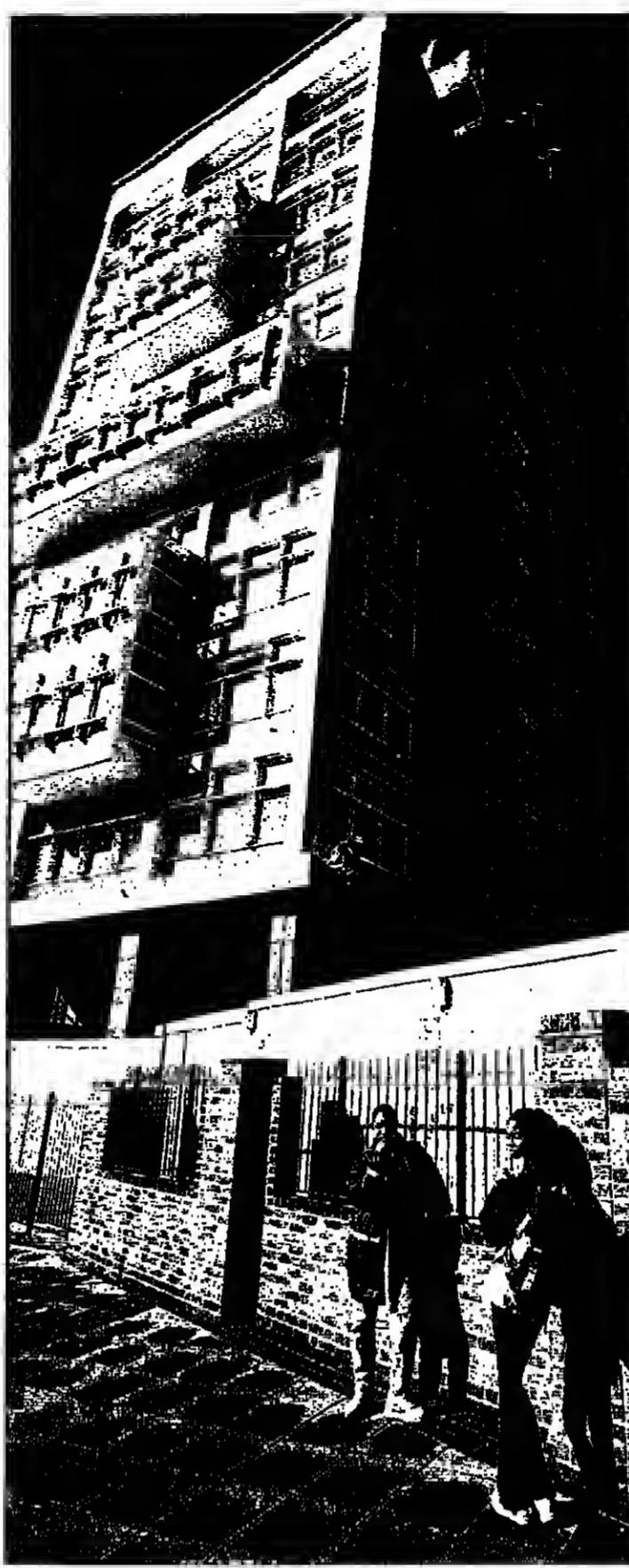
Separate from the row between Freshwater and its leaseholders, landlords are generally responsible for the insurance of a building under the lease and have the right to appoint the insurer. However, under leasehold legislation you have the right to ask for information about the insurance and the cost of the policy must be "reasonable".

You can ask the landlord to give you a written summary of the insurance cover, which must be supplied within one month. This should include the sum for which the property is insured, the name of the insurer and the risks covered. Your landlord may provide a copy of the relevant policy instead. Once you have seen the policy, you can ask to inspect the insurance policy and supporting documents which provide evidence the premiums have been paid.

In some cases, the leaseholder is responsible for insuring the property but the landlord can nominate the insurer. You can challenge this arrangement if the cover is unsatisfactory in any respect or the premiums being charged are excessive.

It is worth checking the building is covered for its full reinstatement value and that the cover allows for inflation. The tenancy relations officer at your local council will be able to give you more information. If the policy is deemed unreasonable your council may help enforce these legal rights.

You are welcome to write to Karen Woolfson, Homebases, c/o Nick Cucciti, "The Independent", One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Karen regrets she is unable to reply personally to all letters



Ensure that your home is well insured Andrew Buurman

What do you do when your insurance against disaster fails to protect you? John Andrew has some advice

Every safety net needs a safety net

HAS YOUR insurance company refused to pay up after a car smash? Did your holiday end in disaster when a thief stole your luggage – but you can't get the money back on your policy?

You need to consult the Insurance Ombudsman Bureau (IOB), set up in 1981. The IOB has over 50 staff, many of whom are lawyers and the ombudsman himself is Walter Merricks, a solicitor.

The service, which is provided free to complainants, is funded by most, but not all, of the nation's insurance companies. Its annual operating budget is just over £3m. Though funded by the industry, the ombudsman and his staff are keen to stress their independence and impartiality. Indeed, the previous ombudsman, Julian Farrand, was often at loggerheads with some members of the scheme whose feet were obstructing his work.

Of the general insurance cases investigated, which are those relating to non-life cover such as car, travel and household policies, about one third are found in favour of policy-holders. For life cover, the decisions are evenly split.

The scheme was originally established to deal with complaints about personal insurance policies. Commercial cover can only be investigated if the insurer agrees. Most of the other schemes encourage individuals to resolve any dispute through a company's internal procedure before involving the ombudsman, but the Insurance Ombudsman Bureau does not.

Policymholders with a complaint complete the bureau's form and forward it to its enquiries and applications department. The bureau will then contact the insurer, which in turn writes to the policyholder outlining its complaints procedure.

This must be followed to the point where the insurer reaches a "final decision". If the complaint remains unresolved after two months, the policyholder must contact the bureau who will pursue the complaint further.

The ombudsman can deal with complaints if:

- It concerns an applicant personally;
- It relates to a policy issued in the UK by a member of the scheme;
- It is about a claim or the administration of the policy.

The ombudsman cannot investigate complaints if:

- The dispute is with someone else's insurer;
- The complaint relates to the level of premiums or decisions as to which risks to cover;
- The matter is already subject to legal proceedings;
- More than six months have elapsed since the insurer's "final decision".

During 1997, the bureau received 67,501 enquiries – 53,432 by phone and 14,169 by post. More than half – 35,027 – related to matters outside its terms of reference.

Of the 32,574 enquiries within the terms of reference, only 4,629 led to an investigation by the bureau – 27,945 were either resolved under insurers' internal complaint procedures, or the complainants did not proceed. The investigated cases do not include those where the insurer decided to raise its offer or withdraw its rejection of a claim before investigation by the bureau.

The ombudsman's annual report for 1997 notes: "This happens on a number of occasions and it is for this reason that no complaint may be investigated until the insurer's chief executive has had the opportunity of reviewing the

matter." This suggests that policyholders should never give up.

Basically, the scheme covers: household, motor, travel, health, loan protection and personal accident insurance. Despite the fact that other types of work were transferred to the Personal Investment Authority Ombudsman Bureau (PIAOB) in July 1994, the IOB continues to adjudicate on some cases involving life and long term insurances (which includes permanent health cover).

In fact, any good independent financial adviser will recognise this problem. He or she should be happy to sit down with you and answer any questions you may have. Here are 10 questions to ask:

Are you tied or independent?

A key question, this will tell you whether your adviser is an independent financial adviser (IFA). If so,

they are obliged to give you the best advice, which means recommending the products and services to meet your needs from across the market. A tied agent is contracted to one company or marketing group and cannot look outside their product range except for non-regulated products such as deposit accounts, mortgages and general insurance. IFAs should be able to offer you a better deal for most products but tied agents have the advantage of back-up from their employer.

Do you have professional indemnity (PD) cover?

Professional indemnity cover is essential for IFAs and means that if they give you bad advice or are otherwise held to be negligent you can sue them and their insurer should pay. Such policies have financial and cover limits and are subject to exclusions so evidence of such cover is no guarantee you would quickly be paid any compensation due.

Are you a member of a professional body?

Many advisers are members of one or more trade or professional bodies. The leading professional body is the Society of Financial Advisers, part of the 100-year-old Chartered Insurance Institute (the CII), and its full members hold the Advanced

Financial Planning Certificate (AFPC) and use the letters MSFA, ASFA or FSFA after their names depending on whether they are an ordinary member, associate or fellow. The AFPC is a much tougher and more specialised exam than the basic Financial Planning Certificate (FPC). The Chartered Institute of Bankers has its own FPC equivalent examinations, though fewer advisers have chosen this route.

What qualifications do you have?

The Financial Planning Certificate (FPC) or equivalent is now a legal requirement to be able to trade, and trainees without the qualification have to be supervised until they pass the three FPC exams. Other qualifications may include the higher-level AFPC, the CII's and SORAs professional association and fellowship qualifications and associateship of the Institute of Taxation. Lawyers and accountants are allowed to give advice as part of their normal profession.

How are you paid?

Advice is usually paid for by fee, either at an hourly rate or at a pre-agreed level or by commission from the product provider. With the former, your adviser gets no financial benefit from choosing any particular provider and many companies will offer a better deal if they are not paying commission. However you will

No guarantee is set in stone

THE TIME has come the Walrus said, to think of many things, of ships and shoes and sealing wax of cobageons and kings and why the sea is boiling hot and whether pigs have wings.

"I do like reciting that poem," I said to Mary, as she sat herself down on my Chesterfield. "Do you realise I won a school prize for my recitation of it at the tender age of 10?"

Trying not to laugh out loud, Mary enquired: "Was that in short trousers by any chance?"

"Somewhat defensively I said "I'll have you know, there is a link between Lewis Carroll's poem and guaranteed investments."

Mary replied: "As far as I am concerned, guaranteed investment products seem particularly appealing when stockmarkets are as wobbly as ours appear to be."

I said: "Guaranteed investments are a paradox. On the one hand we all like to think that when something is referred to as guaranteed it means just that..."

Mary was one step ahead of me: "I'm not sure I want to hear what you're going to say next – in fact don't tell, let me guess. Even when something says it is guaranteed it is not necessarily guaranteed."

"This time I am confused," she retorted. "How on earth can placing my money on deposit be taking a risk. After all, I can put £5,000 in my account today and know it will be £5,000 plus interest in 10 years' time."

I replied: "The capital will be there and the interest but the risk dimension is inflation. If it has risen at a faster rate than the rate of interest then the capital will be worth less in real terms."

"None of us should view anything we do with our money as being without risk. By coming to terms with this we can reconcile the price to be paid for having less risk."

THE FIXERS



RODDY KOHN

Mary asked: "OK, so how does this fit in with other guaranteed investments?"

I replied: "That's easy. We are all apt to see the word 'guaranteed' as something which can be relied upon without asking ourselves how financially strong the company offering the guarantee actually is."

"Does this mean I have to read a balance sheet to work out who is safe?"

My answer was: "No, but it does mean you or your adviser should pay particular attention to the small print in any literature you are given – it always pays to be vigilant."

Here are some good rules of thumb:

■ When an organisation offers a guaranteed product remember to ask under what circumstances would this guarantee not be met?

■ If a product refers to it being 'capital-protected' remind yourself that this is not the same as 'guaranteed'. What it normally means is somebody else is providing the guarantee, so you have to think about that company's strength. You will sometimes find that a company offering a capital secure product is a better choice than a company offering a guaranteed product.

■ Some guarantees require a certain event to happen before the capital is paid back, such as the FTSE 100 being higher in five years' time than its starting point.

Roddy Kohn is principal at independent financial advisers Kohn Cougar, at Wellington House, Wellington Park, Clifton, Bristol, BS8

Want some good advice?

Andrew Couchman seeks a financial adviser with the morals of a saint



Wanted: a financial adviser you can trust with your life Andrew Couchman

have to pay what could be a large sum, especially if your needs are complex. Expect to pay about the same hourly rate as you would pay your accountant or solicitor.

What other expertise is available to you, and how?

Few advisers will be experts across every sector and in some firms one adviser may deal with pensions, one with investments, one with health insurance and so on. There may also be working relationships with local accountants and solicitors and perhaps even bankers. If you are offered an introduction to another specialist firm, check to shop around to compare price and service.

Has your regulator ever disciplined you or your firm?

With an increasing number of firms and even top insurers being subject to fines for reviewing their pensions mis-selling cases too slowly, a fine or reprimand may not necessarily mean a rogue trader. However, you do need to know why the firm was disciplined and what it has done to remedy matters.

What experience do you have?

Tougher regulatory requirements have seen off many of the cowboys, although some still remain. Generally experience still counts for much, not least because financial advice is still as much about human behaviour as it is technical product expertise. The perfect adviser has 20 years' experience, a professional qualification, a degree in psychology and a master's in mathematics, the bedside manner of a good GP, the morals of a saint and will outlive you.

Sound impossible? It probably is so look instead for a good balance of abilities and, above all, for someone you can trust. If it is someone you come to regard as a friend as well, you have probably found your perfect adviser.

Andy Couchman is publishing editor of *HealthCare Insurance Report*

The Insurance Ombudsman Bureau may be contacted at 135 Park Street, London, SE1 9EA (0845 600 6666)

Do yourself a favour: give the taxman less

Each year we give the Treasury £5bn more than we need to. Tony Lyons offers a guide to keeping more of your hard-earned cash

EVERYONE COMPLAINS about the amount they pay the tax man, whether it is on salaries and benefits or interest, dividends and capital gains. Yet many of us fail to take advantage of the tax allowances that can legitimately be claimed.

Are you running your financial affairs as efficiently as you can? Before you have to

employ the services of an accountant and a financial adviser, ensure that you are being as astute as possible in organising your tax affairs.

Don't forget that husband and wife can elect to be taxed singly on their earnings, with both eligible for the single person's allowance. If the wife does not have any earnings, then the husband should claim

the married allowance.

If your wife or husband has minimal or no earnings, it is worthwhile putting some investments and deposits in their name. If they do not pay tax, they can have their investment income paid gross.

In April next year, we will see the introduction of individual savings accounts, which will replace PEPs and TESSAs.

Before the end of the year, the Government should tell us more about its ideas for the future of pensions, especially what it means about "stakeholder pensions".

These innovations will continue the recent history of various Chancellors of the Exchequer introducing legislation to encourage us to invest as efficiently as possible,

something we fail to do. The Inland Revenue, for example, states that non-taxpayers fail to reclaim some £500m a year that they need not have paid, much of this on building society deposits.

A more recent survey by IFA Promotion, which puts people in touch with independent financial advisers, showed that as a nation we paid over £5.5bn

more in tax than we need to, equal to £158 a head. Much of this was due to our not taking advantage of the various tax saving plans that are available. As we have become more sophisticated about investment, so the choice of tax efficient products has grown. Once, it was just National Savings. Then as the government of the day became concerned about

pensions, retirement products were encouraged. Then came encouragement to invest through business enterprise schemes, which were then followed by PEPs, just over 11 years ago, and TESSAs. So there is a wide range of tax efficient investments. This survey looks at some of the opportunities they offer for accumulating a nest egg.

Profits come to those who wait

Regardless of market volatility, PEPs are a good long-term investment. By Tony Lyons

The volatile state of the stock market, with share prices fluctuating widely on a daily basis, has given the marketing departments of PEP management groups a worrying time. If the government keeps to its plan to replace them with Individual Savings Accounts, personal equity plans have a short shelf-life.

Today, the vast bulk of unit trust sales, in particular, are made with PEP wrappers. Yet the promised sales bonanza shows no signs of happening. On the one hand, investors appear to have adopted a wait-and-see attitude. With the 20-per-cent fall in the stock market over the past couple of months, they are obviously concerned at buying a PEP at the wrong time.

Meanwhile, they are also waiting to see just what the ISAs will look like. To date, we are still waiting for the government to unveil the fine print. Until it does, PEP managers cannot say what their ISA offerings will look like. While most will simply swap an ISA wrapper for their existing PEP wrappers, they will not always be able to set up their computer systems to cope with the changes - as it is they are also having to sort out their programs for dealing with the "millennium bug". Already a number of groups have said that they are unlikely to handle the cash or life assurance elements of an ISA.

PEPs have proven themselves to be one of the most popular tax-free investments since their introduction in 1987, attracting almost £80bn. Now, with just over six months to go, should you still buy them?

"Anyone thinking of making a long-term investment of five or more years should still consider PEPs," says Roddy Kohu of Kohn Cougar, a Bristol-based

independent financial adviser (IFA). "They still provide a worthwhile means of sheltering capital gains and dividend income from all tax. However, you must look at the product - not just buy a PEP because of the tax wrapper. Be wary of falling for marketing hype and buying any old PEP. You must choose very carefully."

This is wise advice. Don't buy a PEP just because it is tax-free and the manager is offering a one or two per cent discount on initial charges. Buy because you want a long-term investment and a PEP is a handy way of doing this. Remember the familiar investment principles: make sure the fund you choose suits your aims, look at past performance which, though not a forecast of the future, will tell you how the fund has done. And also look at the consistency of this performance.

Try to pick one that is always near the top of its sector. Look at charges.

If you are considering a lump-sum investment, while timing is important, try not to worry too much about it. To Graham Bates, a Leeds-based

TEN PEP RULES

1. PEPs are only suitable for tax payers
2. A PEP is a tax wrapper for investing in shares
3. Only invest in a PEP because you believe equities will grow faster over the long-term than other savings
4. Do not invest just because of the tax advantages
5. You may only have one PEP manager this fiscal year
6. Up to £6,000 can be invested in a general PEP and £3,000 in a single-company PEP
7. A husband and wife each have their own individual PEP allowance so before the end of this tax year a couple can invest up to £18,000 in PEPs
8. Unless you are an experienced investor, use a PEP that invests in unit or investment trusts
9. A PEP is often cheaper than investing directly in a unit trust and you get all the income and growth tax-free
10. Look at past performance and charges as well as being sure that the PEP meets your investment aims

Volatile markets and Government plans to bring in ISAs make the immediate future of PEPs uncertain

ing it was due for a fall. Well, we all know what has happened since then." If you have a PEP that you pay monthly or regular instalments into, continue doing so. By buying a PEP through regular savings, you are ironing out the ups and downs in the market.

If you need help or advice in selecting the right PEP, use an independent financial adviser. If you are happy making your own decision, rather than buy direct from the management group, why not use a discount broker? This way you will save on initial charges, maybe as much as £180 or more.

When you have bought all you need do is keep your nerve. Sell only when you are ready to - rather than panic because the market is falling. Ignore daily share price movements and remember in five or 10 years, if past performance is any guide at all, you should be more than happy with your profit.

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Tessas feel the pressure

Move quickly to open the last tax-free cash savings, says Abigail Montrose

SAYERS HAVE just six months left to take advantage of Tessas (tax-exempt special savings accounts) before they are phased out. Anyone who opens a Tessa before April will be able to invest the full amount and keep it to maturity.

The great attraction of Tessas is that all the interest earned on your savings is tax-free, providing you do not withdraw any of your original capital during the five-year life of the Tessa.

Because Tessa holders are prepared to tie up their savings for five years, providers usually offer better rates than on other savings accounts. The top Tessas are paying around 0.5 per cent to one per cent more than other top paying accounts.

Tessas are offered by most building societies and banks but because they offer such attractive tax-breaks, there are limits on how much you can save in them and who can have them. To open a Tessa you must be 18 or over and you are limited to one at a time. You can save up to £9,000. Up to £3,000

can be invested in a Tessa in year one, and £1,800 can be added each year. If you invest the maximum in years one to four, you can only invest £600 in year five.

Those who have already held a Tessa can invest up to £9,000 from their maturing Tessa into a follow-up Tessa providing there is no more than six months between the first maturing and the follow-up account being opened. Follow-on Tessas tend to offer slightly better rates of interest.

Both fixed-rate and variable-rate Tessas are available. The advantage of a fixed-rate Tessa is that you know exactly how much interest you are going to earn over the five-year term. But providers will often not allow you to add to a fixed-rate account after your initial deposit, so you may want to invest the full £9,000, which will then be drip-fed into your account over the five-year term, subject to the rules. Fixed-rate Tessas are typically paying around 6.5 per cent.

The top-paying variable-rate Tessas offer between 8 to 8.25 per cent interest. Often the best paying accounts will be offered by the lesser-known names, such as the small regional building societies, but you will need to check if these allow people outside their local area to open an account.

One of the best deals on offer is from Norwich & Peter-

borough, which is paying 8.25 per cent with a minimum opening balance of £100. Others paying eight per cent or more and only requiring a £100 or less include Yorkshire Building Society, Julian Hodge Bank and Midland Bank.

For those looking to move money into a follow-up variable-rate Tessa, one of the top rates is 8.5 per cent being paid by Barclays, but the required opening deposit is £9,000. Principality Building Society, Bradford & Bingley Building Society and Britannia Building Society are also offering good rates with a minimum balance of £3,000. Leeds & Holbeck will accept from £1 and Midland Bank from £100. Both are paying eight per cent or more.

"There are very few fixed-rate Tessas about at the moment because the banks and building societies are unable to obtain good rates on the money markets for investments at present. This is because the markets expect interest rates to fall over the coming years," she says.

The top-paying variable-rate Tessas offer between 8 to 8.25 per cent interest. Often the best paying accounts will be offered by the lesser-known names, such as the small regional building societies, but you will need to check if these allow people outside their local area to open an account.

One of the best deals on offer is from Norwich & Peter-

FINANCE

15

From the NHS to the DSS, the public sector's record in IT is appalling. By Paul Gosling

Systematic failure



Britain's new air traffic control computer system is to cost £90m more than first costed. Will a public sector IT project ever go to plan?

David Rose

News broke last week that the cost of Britain's new air traffic control computer system being installed by Lockheed Martin has jumped from an original £130m to £217m - a 75 per cent increase in six years.

This would be bad enough on its own, but it follows continued speculation about supposed problems with two Department of Social Security IT contracts - the ICL Pathway electronic benefits system and the Andersen Consulting contract to computerise the Contributions Agency records system.

Meanwhile, Wandsworth council has sacked EDS from its housing benefits administration contract, and Kingston council is thinking of doing the same. Whatever the strengths of the public sector, it is becoming increasingly clear that it has an unparalleled record in fouling up IT contracting. So just why are public bodies so bad with IT, and how can they correct a growing crisis?

Contractors, consultants, the National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee all have harsh words for the public sector's record on IT procurement. While there is a variety of reasons for the con-

tracting crisis, some key themes recur with frightening regularity. One factor - which has also been an important consideration in the row over accounting for private finance initiative deals - is that public bodies have been bad at analysing future risks and have failed to contract for which party should bear those risks as situations change. This reflects a level of naivety at even senior levels in the public sector - not just in dealing with IT, but also in how to draw up contract specifications when outsourcing services.

One recent report of the House of Commons' Public Accounts Committee (PAC) investigated the use of the Read codes by the NHS.

A system for barcoding clinical information was developed by Dr James Read, a GP who sold his copyright to the idea to the NHS, and was then employed by it to oversee the system's introduction.

The committee found an almost unbelievable level of weak management, which led to spiralling costs in the codes' implementation, now standing at £32m and rising fast. Astonishingly, the NHS Executive did not carry out an appraisal of costs, benefits and risks before giving approval to the project. The PAC

recommended that in future not only should sound investment appraisals be conducted, but that pilot schemes should be evaluated before implementation. It added that the NHS had made similar mistakes with hospital information systems.

Richard Jones, a partner in Price WaterhouseCoopers' management consulting services, says the problems with IT procurement in the public sector are complex, but often relate to a lack of understanding of IT at senior management level.

"Often new ideas, especially in the new technology area, have been generated bottom up, and senior people continue to want the old systems, and don't have a commitment to making the new systems work," he said.

IT skill levels in the public sector are worryingly weak. Whereas the chief executive of Nationwide is an IT specialist, it is difficult to point to anyone in the public services who has risen on a similar career path.

"The public sector promotes broadly based generalists," Mr Jones pointed out. Salary structures for IT personnel in the public sector are in a different world from business, especially with the pay inflation generated by year 2000 com-

ppliance and euro preparation. Other problems can be caused by an excessive concentration on keeping costs down, often at the expense of an effective system. "One of the downsides of competitive tendering is that you often leave out all change management processes which would make the contracts work," said Mr Jones. "Procurement rules drive the supplier to keep the price tag, which then leaves out the nice tabs. It is of no use if the customer doesn't know how to use it."

And contract specifications can change as the client realises that a modification could make the system better, which introduces cost overruns and delays in specifications. The good news is that, belatedly, the public sector might be learning. Mr Jones, who is in charge of implementing a major IT project introducing resource accounting at the Ministry of Defence, says that the contractor he is currently working with has some good features.

"It includes incentivising us to make the client use the system. It is a very difficult test for us, but it makes us encourage the customer to switch the system on. There are regular reviews, not just a review on final delivery. There is a greater clarity in the client's requirement."

Mike Roache, head of public sector at IT consultants and contractors Cap Gemini, agrees that public bodies are learning from their mistakes. "It is changing," said Mr Roache.

"There is far more emphasis on long term strategic partnerships, not just contracting for individual projects, but to provide whole solutions. It is very difficult to predict in a contract beyond two or three years, and the parties need to build up trust. Some of the contracts with problems now were placed some years ago."

Past mistakes will continue to cause problems, though, not least when the new millennium dawns.

The Public Accounts Committee has concluded that the NHS is still disturbingly unready for 2000, and is putting patients' lives at risk.

Action 2000, the UK Government body responsible for raising awareness of the problem, has warned that local authorities are equally ill-prepared.

Director Gwyneth Flower said: "I'm very unhappy indeed with local authorities. I ask them what they are doing about traffic lights or parking meters and they say 'nothing'. If traffic lights fail, people will not be able to get to work, and that will hit the economy."

IN BRIEF

NINETIES ACCOUNTANTS are shaking off their boring image by hanging up their pinstripes for trendier clothes and rating people skills above number crunching, according to the Co-operative Bank Business Direct.

Just a fifth of accountants under the age of 30 put "interest in numbers" as the most important reason for success, as opposed to half of their colleagues over 50, says the study.

THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS claims to have broken new ground with the issue of guidance aimed at helping directors of listed companies to prepare pro forma financial information included in Stock Exchange prospectuses and circulars.

Robert Hodgkinson, chairman of the institute's financial reporting committee, says there is a need for such assistance because otherwise "investors will only try and do it for themselves on the back of an envelope".

PRIVATE COMPANIES are being urged to respond to the spectre of recession by focusing on product development and market research.

Kingston Smith, the accountancy firm, says that

research by Bristol Business School carried out in the wake of the last downturn suggests that investing in new products and researching new potential markets could help a company stand out from its competitors.

DEFINITIVE ADVICE on such areas as "conversion", "rounding" and "triangulation" is carried in a new guide to the accounting implications of a European single currency. It is published by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales.

THE FINANCIAL costs of the long-hours culture will be examined next month at a conference organised by the accountant firm, Smith & Williamson.

The one-day event, to be held at London's Lanesborough Hotel on 15 October, will bring together representatives of government, business and the professions to examine the financial realities of the work/life debate.

HAINES WATTS is seeking a boost to its aim of becoming the UK's leading accountancy firm in the field of advising owner-managed businesses by joining BKR International, one of the world's top 20 global

associations of accounting firms.

MIKE SUTTON, a former chief accountant at the US Securities and Exchange Commission, and John Cowme, the finance director at Glaxo Wellcome, will be among the speakers at a conference investigating whether harmonisation of international accounting standards is possible.

The event, being held at 1 Whitehall Place, London, tonight (23 September), is being sponsored by Deloitte & Touche and is supported by the International Accounting Standards Committee, which is holding in December its own conference on the development of standards.

THE WELL-ESTABLISHED academic tradition of teaching accountancy students by representing accounting years in the form of 19x1, 19x2 and so on is the latest area of life to be threatened by the Millennium Bug, according to Philip Cahill, a lecturer at Portsmouth University.

However, he points out that his textbook Elements of Accounting is one of the first to adopt a date convention based on the 21st century and is therefore fully 2000-compliant.

ROGER TRAPP

Tearing down the walls

The recent high court victory by Prince Jefri of Brunei will lead to changes in the way accountancy firms 'ring-fence' their departments. By Roger Trapp

ON THE face of it, Prince Jefri looks an unlikely threat to the world's largest accounting firms. Sure, he is the younger brother of the Sultan of Brunei, but the view in the City and elsewhere was that he had fallen out with his brother so badly that he could be counted for little.

But that was before last week's High Court judgment, which sees the prince besting the mighty accounting firm KPMG. In finding for him, Mr Justice Pumfrey has not only embarrassed the firm by suggesting that it faced a conflict of interest "between a former client and an accountant's interest in getting more work".

He has also blown open the whole notion of the "Chinese walls" by which for the past decade or so accountants and the increasingly widely spread investment banks have been able to act for clients where there are clear conflicts of interest. The theory is that teams operating in different parts of the same firm are ring-fenced and so do not know what the others are doing.

Not surprisingly, the concept has been widely ridiculed outside the circles of those attempting to use it to justify their working practices.

Several years ago, another leading international firm - Coopers & Lybrand, now part of PricewaterhouseCoopers - found itself in hot water over the same issue.

Two of its brightest insolvency

accountancy, its results are not stark as they are in accounting.

International clients operating in London may all wish to take on Allen & Overy and its counterparts in the top five, but they still have the opportunity to choose from any number of firms just below that bracket as well as the growing numbers of US firms in London.

In accountancy on the other hand, the completion of the deal that saw the creation of PricewaterhouseCoopers has led to a huge gap between the top five and the others. Add to that the growing belief that only these firms now have the capability to do the really large international jobs and it is easy to see why Howard Davies and his colleagues at the Financial Services Authority were sufficiently worried by this consolidation to speak out.

They could foresee a situation where they would find it hard to appoint an accountancy firm to look into a banking or corporate collapse like those in the late Eighties because all the preferred candidates would have some connection with the problem organisation.

The Prince Jefri case is an indication that - even though the regulators have waved through the deals that have seen the Big Eight become the Big Five - those they claim to serve are unimpressed.

KPMG could, of course, win the case on the appeal that is to be

beard shortly. But, in a sense, the die has been cast. The big firms are being scrutinised in every aspect of their activities. And with the Department of Trade and Industry also last week announcing that it has decided not to meddle with the law on joint and several liability, partners in these organisations are not going to be too relaxed.

After all, the Government's decision to allow them to become limited liability partnerships offers only partial relief from the potentially ruinous claims that will surely follow if the current economic uncertainty turns into a recession.

Not that there are no happy accountants out there. When second-tier practice Stoy Hayward managing partner Adrian Martin announced strong increases in fees and profits, he pointed out that the firm was getting calls from growing businesses that were becoming disillusioned with being advised by large firms, while Kidsons Impey - itself in the throes of a merger - says it is getting calls from bankers and others who are attracted by the fact that it is not likely to be "conflicted out" of any big transactions.

With the turbulence in emerging markets bound to be having an effect, it is possible that those in the firms bent on world domination are feeling that consolidation no longer looks as obvious a solution as it did.

Forced to take stock of my future



THE TRADER

IT HAS been a tense week in the trading room. We have not been able to surf the Net or open a newspaper for days without coming across some pundit predicting gloom, doom and despondency, but particularly doom.

As a result, the bank's share price has plunged by around 54 per cent, and it can only be a matter of time before we are picked off by some larger fish.

The directors have dealt with the whole drama by denying everything, but nobody fails for that kind of thing these days.

Nevertheless, over the past few days the big cheeses have denied lending too much money to dodgy Russian corporates, pooh-poohed the suggestion that they might have lost more on the Far East markets than they were letting on, and hotly objected to the mere idea that they might have to sack lots of their staff.

Not surprisingly, this has left us all in a state of misery from which we can only briefly rescue ourselves by taking our company credit cards out to lunch.

Laura and I have decided that as no one wants to trade with us we may as well eat, so we are fucking away the smoked salmon and Veuve Clicquot in one of the City's more elegant eateries - not a "Dr Johnson's Platter" in sight - and discussing the situation.

We both agree that it would be illogical, stupid but not entirely unlike of the chief honchos to make up for massive losses on the lending side by sacking half the trading room.

After all, not one of them in the boardroom really understands what a derivative is, so if they have to refresh they will make sure the businesses they hang on to are the ones they feel comfortable with - an attitude that brought us to the position we're in the first place, of course.

On the other hand, there have been all those strongly worded statements about how the bank definitely has not lost a boatload on trading in the Far East that somehow only now coming to light.

"I thought we'd escaped lightly on that front," I say to Laura.

"Apparently not," she replies.

We crawl reluctantly back to work arriving just in time to hear the announcement.

half an hour until it is my turn and then I am in a small meeting room on the ground floor near the front door.

Norman comes in looking solemn, and only then do the warning bells start going off in my head.

There are plenty of meeting rooms on the fifth floor, why am I not in one of those?

Why did Laura not come back after her 10-minute "peep talk"?

Why does Norman have a face like a turbot?

He sits down, fidgets a bit, then looks up and says, "I'm afraid we've come to the parting of the ways."

I feel as if I've just been punched in the stomach.

I long to say something witty, but instead I feel myself starting to cry.

Oh, the shame of it!

Norman uncomfortably hands me a crumpled bandkerchief.

"Look," he says in a peevish voice, "this is just as upsetting for me as it is for you..."

Women in accountancy

How Women Fare Against Men in Career Opportunities

*Invitation to a free Business Breakfast*

8th October
The Derek Randall Suite, Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club, Trent Bridge, Nottingham, 7.30 - 9.00 am

14th October
Marcellos Ristorante, 402-404 Midsummer Plaza, Midsummer Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes MK9, 8.15 - 9.30 am

22nd October
Ramada Hotel, Blackfriars Street, Manchester M3 2EQ, 7.45 - 9.30 am

23rd October
Leeds United FC, Eland Road, Leeds, West Yorks LS11, 8.00 - 9.30 am

4th November
The Molineux Conference & Banqueting Centre, Molineux Stadium, Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton, 8.00 - 9.30 am

5th November
Botanical Gardens, Terrace Suite, Westbourne Road, Edgbaston B15 3TR, 7.45 - 9.30 am

11th November
The Savoy, The Strand, London WC2R, 8.15 - 9.30 am

Robert Half International, in conjunction with The Independent, are pleased to invite you to this free Business Breakfast briefing.

As women make up an increasing proportion of new entrants to the accountancy profession, just how much career satisfaction are they likely to achieve? Is it the case that there are still more opportunities for men to succeed than women and do women still believe they have restricted career opportunities?

These are some of the issues dealt with in one of the most comprehensive career surveys produced.

"Accountants with Attitude" is a national survey of the career attitudes of female and male accountants in early and mid career. It was commissioned by the Women in Accountancy group whose President, Anne Jenkins, will be the speaker at this Robert Half Business Breakfast.

Anne will present the results of the survey. She will identify similarities and differences in the career experiences of women and men and will examine the key Human Resources challenges facing the profession.

Her talk will encompass the following points:

- job and career satisfaction
- demand for part-time working
- part-time working consequences
- whose career is more important?
- important features of work
- unequal career opportunities
- catering for diversity.

Anne Jenkins is a Chartered Accountant, formerly with Peat Marwick (KPMG) and a professional trainer. She is a Director of ATC (Professional Training) and has been an accountancy trainer for 10 years responsible for developing career development workshops for women. She is also currently involved in presenting courses on International Accounting Standards and Accounting for the Euro.

How to book your place:
Places at these breakfasts are strictly limited. To book your place, please call the appropriate Robert Half contact as follows:

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Milton Keynes - Pete Laverack - Tel: 01908 201420.
Manchester - Liz Zambelli - Tel: 0161 277 7700.
Leeds - Karen Clayton - Tel: 0113 242 8978.
Wolverhampton - Lorraine Jones - Tel: 01902 425850.
Birmingham - Kulvinder Buray - Tel: 0121 616 4600.
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THE INDEPENDENT

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The Independent will be supplying a special MBA supplement at the Fair and in the paper on Thursday the 22nd of October.

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The Association of MBAs

Life in the dog house

I WORK FOR

SARAH RUFF WORKS FOR LT-COL DUNCAN GREEN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF BATTERSEA DOGS' HOME

I worked as a secretary for the NHS for over 10 years but always felt something was missing. I love helping people, but all the bureaucracy and red tape prevented real job satisfaction. With a name like mine I guess I was fated to end up at the dogs' home. I saw the ad in the paper and sent my CV the same day. I knew that the competition would be fierce so I researched the job thoroughly.

I was very nervous before the interview, expecting Col Green to bark questions at me in a military manner; but actually he had a friendly face and was very relaxed. His two Springer Spaniels sat on the interview and the office cat purred beside me whilst I did my typing test, which immediately made me feel at home. Then the Colonel gave me a questionnaire containing questions like "do you prefer dogs or cats?" and "what aspect of secretarial work do you most hate?" and I left the interview knowing that I had never wanted anything as much as this job.

I've been here now for two years in a far from normal secretarial role. My first job of the day is to feed the three office cats. Tiger, Poppy and TC, who is so grossly overweight that slimming her down is one of my duties. After clearing the litter trays I attend to the mail, most of which comes from owners telling us how their re-homed cat or dog is getting on. Co-ordinating Lt-Col Green's schedule takes up a lot of time because the work in the animal welfare world is never ending.

Another aspect to my job involves helping out at shows, and this year I



Sara Ruff, boss Lt-Col Green and office pets

Peter McDiarmid

manned the annual re-homed dogs' reunion at Battersea Park for over 1,500 dogs. I also accompany Col Green to talks at schools and institutes and occasionally take visitors around the kennels, including schoolchildren and representatives from animal shelters in other countries. We also have a BBC team on site at the moment making 30 programmes about the dogs' home,

but so far I have escaped being filmed. At the moment there are 700 dogs, 121 cats and 100 staff here. We have a no-destruction policy so all the animals are eventually re-homed. For example, when the TV programme Pet Rescue recently featured Desmond, a Rottweiler cross who had lost his confidence and needed a happy home, he was immediately snapped up. All kinds of people

bring dogs and cats in for re-homing, including animals made homeless as the result of a marital break-up. I have even found two cats and a rabbit left outside our front door and I have seen some really sad cases of neglect over the years. But I have also seen many people in tears as they were reunited with a dog or cat they thought was lost forever.

I love looking out from my window and watching happy owners walking away with their new dog. A lot of famous people come to Battersea looking for a dog or cat, for example Kevin Spacey recently got a dog from us, and Chris Evans and Bob Geldof took cats home.

The staff are very positive and although we can all get soppy about the animals we do not get over-emotional. We are allowed to bring our own dogs to work and in our office alone we have eight dogs and three cats. I can't eat my lunch in the office because I am immediately surrounded by eager faces and I don't wear a suit because it would be covered in fur and hair in no time.

If a dog gets depressed a member of staff will take it under his or her wing and I always walk one of the dogs in the park at lunchtime. This is like a second home to me. I put in a lot of hours and have even worked over Christmas. I used to be slightly frightened of dogs, but I soon realised that once they know your smell they usually become your friend for life.

I can easily see myself here for the next 20 years and I know how lucky I am to have my dream job.

INTERVIEW BY KATIE SAMPSON

programmes about the dogs' home,

but so far I have escaped being filmed.

At the moment there are 700 dogs, 121 cats and 100 staff here. We have a no-

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needed a happy home, he was immedi-

ately snapped up. All kinds of people

Oh, to be teetotal



I HAVE one of those Sundays where you go out to lunch at midday and come home at 2am after 14 hours' solid drinking and nothing to eat apart from the oxidized heel of a loaf of bread and cheese off which you've had to cut the mouldy bits. And as Monday means new job for temps, I'm in trouble.

I am obviously didn't scrape the mould off that cheese too well, as it is now coating the roof of my mouth. Then realize that my body has been pinned down in the night by Lilliputians, and I am unable to move. Drift back into partial coma.

Sam: eyes spring open, feet hit floor. One of those sour headaches, like someone running their fingernails down a blackboard, grips the back of my skull, while someone thumps between my eyes with a rubber hammer. Run bath, consider coffee, realise I've got 45 minutes to get across town. Consider ditching bath but alcohol seeps out through your pores, or so my mother told me. If I'm not going to go into a new workplace smelling of meths, bath it has to be. Besides, the only way to get the black stuff from under my fingernails is to wash my hair.

8.30: No tights. There are five pairs, actually, but

each has a large hole in the left calf from the square metal dustbin under the desk at my last place of work. Pull on suit and rip button off shirt. Oh god-oh-

8.40: Run to Tube. Paranoia convinces me that someone is following me and ducking behind hedges when I look back. There is a high-pitched whine in my ears. Long for a sausage sandwich, but turning up to a new job and eating breakfast is black mark central.

8.50: Newsagent has run out of tights. Down into Tube, swipe on foundation on the platform. Strap-hang to Bank, then get a seat by elbowing an old lady out of the way.

Blusher, mascara, eyeshadow. Draw a pair of lips on, the cupid's bow exaggerated to drag queen proportions by the lurching of the carriage.

8.10: Shop in station has only American tan tights. Almost cry, then buy them

anyway. Run down Moorgate, catch heel in grating, tear chunk out of knee.

9.15: arrive. Announce myself to kindly-looking matron. "You're late," she snarls. "I'm sorry," I say, "I had an accident." Point to my knee, which is black and crusty with red bits. "My God," she says. "Haven't you got any tights?" I brandish my American tans and she says "Well, they're not going to cover it." "I'm sorry," I say. "I'll show you the switchboard," she says in that "and call the agency" voice.

As she brushes past me, she sniffs and looks suspicious. Leads me into a windowless room where a digital switchboard and a pair of headphones await. "You know how it works?" "Yes, I know. Is the database up-to-date?" "Of course," she snarls. She turns her head away, then throws me a look of disgusted comprehension. Now I know she's going to call the agency. All I can think of is the extra Ibuprofen in my handbag. The phone goes.

She stands and watches as I take my seat, strap on the headphones, hit return and say in my sweetest voice, "Good morning, Alcohol Information Group. How can I help you?"

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Please apply with CV and covering letter to Professor M Hoare, Head of Department, Department of Biochemical Engineering, University College London, Torrington Place, London WC1E 7JE by Friday 9 October 1998.

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NEW FILMS

CHARACTER (15)

Director: Mike van Diem
Starring: Jan Decleer, Fredjo van Huel (subtitles)
Mike van Diem's intelligent but uneven drama about betrayal and revenge won this year's Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film, and it certainly comes with what the Academy adores: a solid story, spanning a considerable timescale and confidently told. The picture is never as gripping as it should have been, though the foreboding Gothic gloom sits nicely with the grotesque compositions.
West End: Curzon Mayfair

THE DOOM GENERATION (18)

Director: Gregg Araki
Starring: James Duval, Rose McGowan
Gregg Araki continues his investigation of apocalyptic modern America with this gory, on-the-cheek road movie about a couple who hit the road with a psychotic friend. Fun for the first half-hour, deadening for the rest.
West End: ABC Piccadilly

KISSING A FOOL (15)

Director: Doug Ellin
Starring: David Schwimmer, Jason Lee, Mill Avital
It's another comedy about the male fear of commitment. David Schwimmer plays a television portcaster who falls in love with his best friend's editor (Mill Avital). But insecurity intrudes on their wedding plans until the groom-to-be feels compelled to test his love's loyalty.
West End: Virgin Trocadero

EATLIC WEAPON 4 (15)

Director: Richard Donner
Starring: Mel Gibson, Danny Glover, Joe Pesci
The poster copy for this latest instalment of the gratifying comedy-thriller series says it all: "The action you expect; the faces you love." This time, tactless Rigg (Mel Gibson) and Murtaugh (Danny Glover) are up against Triads in the underfeetling trade, but a more pressing issue is their own middle-age. The screenplay acknowledges that this pair are not as nimble as they used to be, and makes room for a ripe new male talent, the young actor Chris Rock.

West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Rd, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

LOVE IS THE DEVIL (18)

Director: John Maybury
Starring: Derek Jacobi, Daniel Craig, Tilda Swinton
Derek Jacobi gives a ferocious performance as Francis Bacon in this first feature from the acclaimed and adventurous experimental filmmaker John Maybury. Among the film's many technical accomplishments are the blurred, twisted and grotesque visual compositions which strongly evoke the artist's work.
West End: Barbican Screen, Chelsea Cinema, Gate Notting Hill, Metro, Phoenix Cinema, Renzi, Richmond Filmhouse, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Hill

MEN WITH GUNS (HOMBRES ARMADOS) (15)

Director: John Sayles
Starring: Federico Luppi, Damian Delgado, Tania Cruz (subtitles)
John Sayles' conscientious drama about a doctor who discovers that each of his previous students has met a grisly end in an unspecified Latin American country. Sayles aims some intriguing ideas, but he seems consistently unable to animate them.
West End: Metro, Rio Cinema, Virgin Fulham Road

PEPE LE MOKO (15)

Director: Julian Duvivier
Starring: Jean Gabin, Mireille Balin (subtitles)
Long-overdue revival of this tender thriller, with Jean Gabin as the underworld hero protecting the kasbah. There are shades here of what would flourish into film noir, but the driving force is the characters' need to escape, whether it is Algiers or simply the past from which they are fleeing.
West End: National Film Theatre

Ryan Gilbey

GENERAL RELEASE

IMAGEDDON (12)

It's deeply stupid film purports to be a tender, meaty action adventure and a real disaster movie in which a meteor is on a collision course with Earth.
End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

E AVENGERS (12)

Oh Fennies dons the bowler hat as Sted, Umaran pours herself into a cat suit as Emma 1, while Sean Connery plans to take over the id in this unsuccessful TV-to-film transfer.
End: Warner Village West End

JYTHMOTHER (15)

odearing reggae musical which takes an old and douses it in gaudy colours. The film is on Anita (Angela Lauren Smith), a "babymama" who longs to be a reggae star but is jerked by her responsibility to her children.
End: Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Trocadero

IOSSU (15)

sumptuous swashbuckler doesn't break new ground, but is acted and shot off-sicent braggadocio.
End: ABC Swiss Centre, Curzon Minima

SIN BETTE (15)

isn't about romance and deception is basis for this shallow but breezy comedy. ca Lange plays Bette, the housekeeper who expertly weaves a web of betrayal around one she knows.
End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Swiss Cottage

DAYTRIPPERS (15)

ied that her husband (Stanley Tucci) may be in an affair: Eliza (Nope Davis) confides in parents, only to find the whole family accompanying her to Manhattan to confront him.
End: ABC Swiss Centre, Rio Cinema

KILLITTE (PG)

little proves that Eddie Murphy's talents are surprisingly pliable within the constraints of certificate.
End: Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon London, Odeon Marble Arch, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village

S BAYOU (15)

of-passage drama that feels for the most part dictated Fried Green Tomatoes.
End: Odeon Mezzanine, Virgin Trocadero

OT GAME (18)

d Washington plays a man doing time for the of his wife who is offered a deal which cut short his sentence if he can persuade basketball star son to sign up with the nor's alma mater.
End: Clapham Picture House, Ritzy 10, Virgin Trocadero

I RELATED (15)

thriller which gives a few welcome twists to the routine of drive-by shootings and homeboys. James Belushi is spectacularly steozy.
End: Virgin Trocadero

JILLA (PG)

am which cooked up *Stargate* and *Individe Day* is generally very adept at acting enjoyable adventures. Unfortunately on this occasion, their light touch has had them.
End: Empire Leicester Square

ORSE WHISPERER (PG)

Redford's film of Nicholas Evans' novel about the intelligence of the narcissistic allure of Redford plays a Montana farmer who uses in equine psychology and who agrees with Kristin Scott Thomas whose daughter has been maimed in a riding accident.
End: Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon West End, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon

CINEMA

WEST END

ABC BAKER STREET (0870-9020418) Baker Street The Last Days Of Disco 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm Lethal Weapon 4 2.20pm, 5.20pm

ABC PANTON STREET (0707-9020404) Piccadilly Circus The Big Lebowski 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.05pm, 8.30pm Jackie Brown 1.30pm, 4.40pm, 7.45pm The Last Days Of Disco 1.10pm, 3.35pm, 6.25pm Live Flesh 1.40pm, 4.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC PICCADILLY (0171-287 4322) Piccadilly Circus The Doom Generation 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.50pm Lotta 3.10pm, 8pm Love And Death On Long Island 1.05pm, 4.20pm, 8.40pm

ABC SWISS AVENUE (0870-9020402) Leicester Square/Tottenham Court Road The Horns Whisperer 1.15pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm The X-Files 12.50pm, 3.20pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ABC CAMDEN TOWN (0181-315 4219) Camden Town Cousin Bette 6.15pm The Last Days Of Disco 12.45pm, 3.25pm, 6pm, 8.50pm Lethal Weapon 4 12noon, 2.50pm, 5.45pm, 8.35pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 12.40pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm Saving Private Ryan 12.30pm, 4.10pm, 7.45pm The X-Files 12.15pm, 3pm, 5.55pm, 8.40pm

ABC HAYMARKET (0181-315 4212) Piccadilly Circus Cousin Bette 1.25pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ODEON KENSINGTON (0181-315 4214) High Street The Horse Whisperer 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm The Last Days Of Disco 12.35pm, 3.20pm, 6pm, 8.50pm Lethal Weapon 4 12.05pm, 3.05pm, 6.05pm, 9.05pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1pm, 4.15pm, 9.15pm Love Is The Devil 1.25pm, 3pm, 5.55pm, 8.40pm

ODEON LEICESTER SQUARE (0181-315 4215) Leicester Square The Horse Whisperer 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm The Last Days Of Disco 12.15pm, 2.45pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm Saving Private Ryan 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ODEON MARBLE ARCH (0181-315 4216) Marble Arch Armageddon 1.35pm, 8.55pm The Horse Whisperer 1.35pm, 5.10pm, 8.45pm Lethal Weapon 4 12.15pm, 3.15pm, 6.20pm, 9.20pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 12.35pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm Saving Private Ryan 1.25pm, 3.40pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ODEON MEZZANINE (0181-315 4217) Leicester Square Eve's Bayou 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm The Object Of My Affection 1.35pm, 3.50pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm The Last Days Of Disco 1.15pm, 3.30pm, 6.10pm, 8.30pm Love Is The Devil 1.25pm, 3pm, 5.55pm, 8.40pm

ODEON SWISS COTTAGE (0181-304 0403) Leicester Square/Eve's Bayou 1.45pm, 4pm, 6.20pm, 8.45pm The Spanish Prisoner 1.30pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm

ODEON TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD (0870-9020414) Tottenham Court Road Lethal Weapon 4 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 6.15pm, 8.40pm

ODEON WEST END (0181-315 4221) Leicester Square Lost In Space 12noon, 2.10pm, 5.20pm, 8.40pm The X-Files 1.20pm, 3.15pm, 5.55pm, 8.35pm

PHOENIX CINEMA (0990-888990) Piccadilly Circus The Cactus 9.05pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 12.30pm, 3pm, 6.30pm, 9.30pm Love Is The Devil 9.05pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.40pm, 4.40pm, 7.40pm, 10.30pm, 12.15pm, 3pm, 6.15pm, 9.15pm Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels 1.40pm, 4.40pm, 7.40pm, 10.30pm, 12.15pm, 3pm, 6.15pm, 9.15pm

PLAZA (0990-888990) Plaza/Brixton 1.45pm, 3.45pm, 6.45pm, 8.45pm Sliding Doors 1.30pm, 3.20pm, 6.20pm, 8.30pm Species II 1pm, 3.20pm, 6pm, 8.30pm

GATE NOTTING HILL (0171-727 4043) Notting Hill Love Is The Devil 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 8.50pm

HAMMERSMITH VIRGIN (0870-9070718) Ravenscourt Park/Hammersmith The Horse Whisperer 1.20pm, 3.40pm, 6.10pm, 8.40pm

ICA CINEMA (0171-254 6677) Dalton Kingsland Men With Guns 3pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm

RITZ CINEMA (0171-733 2229) Brixton Aguirre, Wrath Of God 3.40pm (+ Short: The Story Of Engagement) 5.30pm (+ Short: Flawed) 8.30pm

RIO CINEMA (0171-254 3567) Notting Hill Love Is The Devil 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.50pm, 8.50pm

BARNET (0171-727 6050) Notting Hill Love Is The Devil 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 6.50pm, 8.50pm

CURZON MIMESMA (0171-369 1723) Knightsbridge Love Is The Devil 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.35pm

NOTTING HILL CORNER (0171-277 6675) Notting Hill Love Is The Devil 2.30pm, 4.45pm, 6.50pm, 8.50pm

METRO (0171-734 1506) Piccadilly Circus Love Is The Devil 2pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.30pm

THE X-FILES (15)

THE WEDDING SINGER (15)

SPECIES II (18)

LA VIE DE JESUS (THE LIFE OF JESUS) (NC)

SEE The Independent Recommends, above.

West End: ICA Cinema

THE SPANISH PRISONER (PG)

David Mamet's intricate thriller is a playful exercise in twisting a plot until it locks; there is a scientific detachment about the way he explores every permutation of his Kafkaesque scenario, though the movie is also silly funny.

West End: Clapham Picture House, Ritzy 10, Virgin Trocadero

THE BACHELOR & CASTLE (0171-703 4968)

Elephant & Castle Lethal Weapon 4 1.30pm, 3.45pm, 6.10pm, 8.45pm

RICHMOND
ODEON (0181-315 4218) BR/
Ritter, Lethal Weapon 4
12.40pm, 3.30pm, 9.10pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking
Barrels 4.10pm, 4.10pm, 6.40pm,
9.30pm Saving Private Ryan
1.10pm, 4.50pm, 8.30pm

ODEON STUDIO (0181-315 4218)
8R/F, Richmond Armageddon
1.40pm, 5.20pm, 8pm, 10pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking
Barrels 6.30pm The Horse Whisperer
1pm, 4.30pm, 8.10pm The Land
Giraffe 1.10pm, 6.50pm The
Spanish Prisoner 3.30pm, 9.20pm
The X-Files 1.10pm, 9.10pm

RIMFORD
ABC (01870-9020419) BR: Rimford:
Lethal Weapon 4 2.20pm, 5.20pm,
8.10pm Lock, Stock & Two
Smoking Barrels 2.10pm,
5.50pm, 8.35pm Saving Private
Ryan 2.10pm, 7.30pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (01708-
729040) BR: Rimford Armageddon
1.45pm, 4.50pm, 8pm Dr Dolittle
12.20pm, 2.30pm, 4.40pm, 6.40pm,
8.45pm Great Expectations
1.30pm, 4.15pm, 6.30pm, 8.45pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking
Barrels 4.10pm, 4pm, 6.20pm
8.30pm Lost In Space
12.05pm, 2.45pm, 5.30pm, 8.15pm
Saving Private Ryan 12.15pm,
3.50pm, 7.30pm The X-Files
12.30pm, 3.10pm, 5.50pm, 8.35pm

STAPLES CORNER
VIRGIN (0870-9070171) BR: Crick-
lewood Dr Dolittle 2pm, 4.20pm,
6.20pm Lethal Weapon 4 12.45pm,
3.30pm, 6.15pm, 8pm Lock, Stock
& Two Smoking Barrels 1.20pm,
3.45pm, 6.30pm, 9pm Mr Nice Guy
1.30pm, 4pm, 7.45pm, 8.30pm
Saving Private Ryan 12.15pm,
3.50pm, 7.30pm The X-Files 3.15pm, 6pm,
8.45pm

STREATHAM
ABC (0870-9020415) BR:
Streatham Hill The Doom General-
ship 1.40pm, 4.10pm, 6.10pm, 8pm
8.40pm Mr Nice Guy 2.15pm,
4.35pm, 6.55pm Saving Private
Ryan 2.20pm, 7.45pm

ODEON (0181-315 4219) BR:
Streatham Hill Braxton Clapham
Comedy imagination 8pm
Dr Dolittle 2.10pm, 4.10pm, 6pm
Get Game 8.10pm Local Hero
4.12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking
Barrels 1.40pm, 4pm, 6.20pm,
8.40pm Saving Private Ryan
12.40pm, 4.10pm, 7.40pm
The X-Files 12.25pm, 3.05pm,
5.45pm

STRATFORD
NEW STRATFORD PICTURE
HOUSE (0181-555 3365) BR/
Stratford East Babymother 2pm,
4.25pm, 6.50pm, 9.10pm Lethal
Weapon 4 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 5pm,
8.40pm Lock, Stock & Two Smok-
ing Barrels 1.30pm, 4pm, 6.30pm,
9pm Saving Private Ryan 1pm,
7.45pm

TURPINNICK LANE
CORONET (0181-888 2519)
Turpinnick Lane, Lethal Weapon 4
3pm, 5.45pm, 8.20pm Lock, Stock
& Two Smoking Barrels 4pm,
6.5pm, 8.35pm Saving Private
Ryan 4.05pm, 7.40pm

SURREY QUAYS

UCI (0870-889090) Surrey Quays
Armageddon 12.45pm, 4.15pm,
7.45pm Dr Dolittle 2.30pm,
4.45pm, 7.30pm Godzilla 1pm, 4pm
The Horse Whisperer 12.30pm,
4.30pm, 8.15pm Lethal Weapon 4
3pm, 5.45pm, 8.30pm The Little
Mermaid 12.15pm Lock, Stock &
Two Smoking Barrels 3.45pm,
6.15pm, 7.9pm, 9.15pm, 10pm Lost
In Space 7pm The Magic Sword:
Quest For Camelot 1.5pm Saving
Private Ryan 12noon, 1.30pm,
3.30pm, 5.15pm, 7.15pm, 8pm Species
II 4.45pm, 7.45pm The X-Files
3pm, 8pm

WALTHAMSTOW
ABC (0870-9020424) Waltham-
stow Central Lethal Weapon 4
2.15pm, 4.45pm, 6.10pm, 8pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking
Barrels 1.10pm, 3.15pm, 5pm,
8.10pm, 8.40pm Saving Private
Ryan 2.30pm, 7.30pm

WALTON ON THAMES

THE SCREEN AT WALTON (01932-
252825) BR: Walton on Thames
Lethal Weapon 4 2.50pm, 5.40pm,
8.20pm Saving Private Ryan
3.25pm, 7.30pm

WILLESDEN
BELLE-VUE (0181-830 0822)
Willesden Green Lethal Weapon
4pm, 6.30pm, 9pm

WIMBLEDON
ODEON (0181-315 4222) BR/
Wimbledon South Wimbledon Dr
Dolittle 2.10pm, The Horse
Whisperer 4.05pm, 7.30pm Lethal
Weapon 4 1.10pm, 3.15pm, 5pm,
8.10pm Lock, Stock & Two
Smoking Barrels 1.0pm, 3.35pm,
6.05pm, 8.35pm Saving Private
Ryan 4.05pm, 7.40pm

WOODFORDE
ABC (0181-988 3463) South
Woodford Lethal Weapon 4 2pm,
5.20pm, 8.10pm Lock, Stock & Two
Smoking Barrels 1.20pm, 4pm,
6.10pm, 8.40pm Saving Private
Ryan 2.40pm, 7.30pm

WOOLWICH
CORONET (0181-884 5043) BR:
Woolwich Arsenal Lock, Stock &
Two Smoking Barrels 4pm,
6.15pm, 8.35pm Saving Private
Ryan 4.05pm, 7.40pm

CINEMA
COUNTRYWIDE

BRIGHTON
ABC EAST STREET (01273-
27010) Dr Dolittle (PG); Lethal
Weapon 4 (15); Lock, Stock & Two
Smoking Barrels (18); Saving
Private Ryan (15); There's
Something About Mary (15)

COVENTRY
CAPITOL ODEON (01222-227058);
Armageddon 112; Dr Dolittle
(PG); Good Will Hunting (15);
Godzilla (PG); The Good
Fight (15); Lock, Stock & Two
Smoking Barrels (18); The
Magical World Of Disney (PG);
Raiders Of The Lost Ark (PG);
Saving Private Ryan (15);
Species II (18); There's
Something About Mary (15);
The X-Files (15)

CARDIFF
CAPITOL ODEON (01222-227058);
Armageddon 112; Dr Dolittle
(PG); Godzilla (PG); The Good
Fight (15); Lock, Stock & Two
Smoking Barrels (18); Saving
Private Ryan (15); There's
Something About Mary (15);
The X-Files (15)

CHAMBERS
CURZON (01233-713441);
Famous Fred (PG); The Horse
Whisperer (PG); Lethal Weapon 4
(15); Mrs Dalloway (PG);
Saving Private Ryan (15);
There's Something About Mary (15)

VIRGIN (0541-555 1515);
Armageddon 112; Dr Dolittle
(PG); Cousin Bette (15);
Good Will Hunting (15);
Godzilla (PG); The Horse
Whisperer (PG); Lethal
Weapon 4 (15); Lock, Stock & Two
Smoking Barrels (18); Saving
Private Ryan (15); There's
Something About Mary (15);
The X-Files (15)

CHICHESTER
CINEMA CENTRE (01243-
786500) The Spanish Prisoner (PG)
4.30pm The X-Files (15). 8.15pm

IPSWICH
FILM THEATRE (01473-215544)
The Spanish Prisoner (PG) 6.15pm
8.30pm Way Out West & The
Music Box (U) 6pm, 8.15pm

NORWICH
CINEMA CITY (01603-622047) The
Land Girls (12) 5.45pm

OXFORD
PHENIX PICTURE HOUSE
(01865-554909) Blade Runner -
The Director's Cut (15); 6.30pm
Cousin Bette (15); 6.45pm
The Crucible (12); 9.30pm
Metroland 4pm The Spanish
Prisoner (PG) 4.15pm, 9.15pm

PLYMOUTH
ARTS CENTRE (01752-206114)
Nowhere (18) 8pm

ODEON (0181-315 4219) BR/
Ritter, Lethal Weapon 4 2pm,
4.20pm, 6.20pm Lock, Stock &
Two Smoking Barrels 1.20pm,
3.45pm, 6.30pm Saving Private
Ryan 1.10pm, 4.50pm, 8.30pm

ODEON STUDIO (0181-315 4218)
8R/F, Richmond Armageddon
1.40pm, 5.20pm, 8pm, 10pm
Lock, Stock & Two Smoking
Barrels 6.30pm The Horse
Whisperer 1pm, 4.30pm, 8.10pm
The Land Girls 1.10pm, 6.50pm The
Spanish Prisoner 3.30pm, 9.20pm
The X-Files 1.10pm, 9.10pm

ODEON LIBERTY 2 (01708-
729040) BR: Rimford:
Lethal Weapon 4 2.20pm, 5.20pm,
8.10pm Lock, Stock & Two
Smoking Barrels 2.10pm,
5.50pm, 8.35pm Saving Private
Ryan 2.20pm, 7.45pm

ODEON (0181-315 4218) BR/
Ritter, Lethal Weapon 4 2pm,
4.20pm, 6.20pm Lock, Stock &
Two Smoking Barrels 1.20pm,
3.45pm, 6.30pm Saving Private
Ryan 1.10pm, 4.50pm, 8.30pm

ODEON (0181-315 4218) BR/
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Two Smoking Barrels 1.20pm,
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Ryan 1.10pm, 4.50pm, 8.30pm

ODEON (0181-315 4218) BR/
Ritter, Lethal Weapon 4 2pm,
4.20pm, 6.20pm Lock, Stock &
Two Smoking Barrels 1.20pm,
3.45pm, 6.30pm Saving Private
Ryan 1.10pm, 4.50pm, 8.30pm

ODEON (0181-315 4218) BR/
Ritter, Lethal Weapon 4 2pm,
4.20pm, 6.20pm Lock, Stock &
Two

WEDNESDAY RADIO

RADIO 1
(97.5-99.8MHz FM)
6.30 Chris Moyles. **9.00** Simon Mayo. **12.00** Jo Whiley. **2.00** Mark Radcliffe. **4.00** Dave Pearce. **6.30** Steve Lamacq - The Evening Session. **8.30** Movie Update with Mark Kermode. **9.40** John Peel. **10.30** Mary Anne Hobbs. **12.00** The Breezeblock. **2.00** Emma B. **4.00** - **5.30** Clive Warren.

RADIO 2
(88.9-92.7MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Kennedy. **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan. **9.30** Ken Bruce. **12.00** Jimmy Young. **2.00** Ed Stewart. **5.05** John Dunn. **7.00** Nick Barracough. **8.00** Mike Harding. **9.00** Gloria Estefan's Sounds of Miami. **10.00** Top of the Pops 2 on 2. **10.30** Richard Allinson. **12.05** Steve Madden. **1.00** 32nd Annual Country Music Association Awards. See Pick of the Day. **4.00** - **8.00** Alex Lester.

RADIO 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air.
9.00 Masterworks.
10.30 Artist of the Week.
11.00 Sound Stories.
12.00 Composer of the Week: Constant Lambert.
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert.
2.00 The BBC Orchestras.
4.00 Choral Evensong.
5.00 In Tune.
7.30 Performance on 3. Chris de Souza introduces Simon Rattle's last concert in his role as musical director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. The concert was given last month in Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Hillevi Martinpelto (soprano), Anne Sofie von Otter (mezzo), City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus, Youth Chorus and Orchestra/Simon Rattle. Thomas Ades: Asyla, Mahler: Symphony No 2 (Resurrection). See Pick of the Day.
9.40 Postscript. Tibor Fischer introduces five of the world's leading writers who are, as yet, little known to British audiences: 'Ludmilla Ullitskaya: Sonchka, Bronnka, Daughter of Bohemia', Ludmilla Ullitskaya - twice shortlisted for the Russian equivalent of the Booker Prize - is a leading light in the new generation of Russian feminist

PICK OF THE DAY

THIS EVENING Radio 3 marks a watershed in Britain's cultural life, transmitting the last concert by Simon Rattle (right) as musical director of the CBSO. Performance (7.30pm R3) consists of a piece by Thomas Ades, Asyla, and Mahler's Resurrection Symphony. The other main musical event is the Night of the Big Hats: the Country Music Association

Awards (1am R2), live from Nashville. Night Waves (10.45pm R3) includes a discussion of brevity in fiction. Obviously, that isn't enough to fill the whole programme, though, so there will also be an interview with Turner-shortlisted Chris Offill, whose use of elephant dung in his work seems like an unnecessary gift to haters of modern art.

ROBERT HANKS



writers. Her latest novel is a tender exploration of womanhood and a celebration of the possible in the face of the impossible.

10.00 Ensemble. Mozart wrote a quintet to show off the skills of a blind glass-harmonica virtuoso; Ravel composed a septet for harp, flute, clarinet and string quartet as harp manufacturers vied for supremacy. Penny Gore introduces a selection of works for unusual ensembles, including those works by Mozart and Ravel. Nielsen's Serenata invincibilis and excerpts from septets by Saint-Saëns, Beethoven and Stravinsky.
10.45 Night Waves. Does size matter when it comes to literary fiction? As American writers still strive to produce the epic novel, British fiction seems to be shrinking. Laura Cumming explores the culture of brevity and discusses new writing from Martin Amis, Jeff Noon and others. And she talks to painter Chris Offill - recently shortlisted for the Turner Prize - whose eclectic use of popular imagery, abstraction, paint and vanished elements dung makes him one of the most innovative young artists working in Britain today. See Pick of the Day.
11.30 Jazz Notes.

12.00 Composer of the Week: Mendelssohn. (R3)

1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

RADIO 4

(92.4-94.6MHz FM)

6.00 Today.

9.00 Midweek.

9.45 A Kind of Fallen Angel.

Awards (1am R2), live from Nashville. Night Waves (10.45pm R3) includes a discussion of brevity in fiction. Obviously, that isn't enough to fill the whole programme, though, so there will also be an interview with Turner-shortlisted Chris Offill, whose use of elephant dung in his work seems like an unnecessary gift to haters of modern art.

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1.00 NEWS: Woman's Hour.

1.10 NEWS: Crimewaves. (R)

1.30 Up the Garden Path.

1.20 NEWS: You and Yours.

1.00 The World at One.

1.30 Inspiration. (R)

2.00 NEWS: The Archers.

2.15 Afternoon Play: The Charm Factory.

3.00 NEWS: Gardeners' Question Time.

3.30 Faith on the Front Line.

3.45 Tales We Tell.

4.00 NEWS: All in the Mind.

4.30 Thinking Allowed.

5.00 PM.

6.00 Six O'Clock News.

6.30 Frank Muir - a Kentish Lad Remembered. (R)

7.00 NEWS: The Archers.

7.15 Front Row. Mark Lawson reports on a new - and very short - book by E Annie Proulx, bestselling author of *The Shipping News*.

7.45 The Jury. By Matthew Solon. A high-profile public figure is fighting a libel case to preserve her reputation. As proceedings get under way, it becomes clear to the members of the jury that the trial will have an impact on their own lives. With Suzanne Bertish, Patrick Robinson and Kelly Hunter. Director Andy Jordan (d2/5).

7.50 NEWS: The Moral Maze.

Michael Buerk charts an investigation of the moral questions behind this week's news. Witnesses face cross-examination from Janet Daley, Ian Hargreaves, David Starkey and David Cook.

8.45 Divided We Stand. The second instalment of Robert Robinson's four-part idiosyncratic

history of the century.

9.00 NEWS: Isambard's Bastards. John Waits investigates the new successes in the British engineering industry.

9.30 Midweek. Lively conversation with Libby Purves and guests.

10.00 The World Tonight: With Robin Lustig.

10.45 Book at Bedtime: Enduring Love. By Ian McEwan, abridged in ten parts by Penny Leicester, read by David Horovitch. A searing tale of love and obsession, set in contemporary London (d10).

11.00 Hearing with Hegley. Poet John Hegley entertains, wielding a microphone and a book of verse. With Nigel Piper and the Popticians.

11.45 The Goldfish Bowl.

12.00 King Stupid.

12.30 News.

12.30 Late Book: The Tesseract.

12.45 Shipping Forecast.

1.00 As World Service.

1.30 World News.

1.35 Shipping Forecast.

5.40 Inshore Forecast.

5.45 Prayer for the Day.

5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.

RADIO 4 LW

9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service.

12.00 - 12.40 News Headlines;

Shipping Forecast.

5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast.

RADIO 4 LW

9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service.

12.00 - 12.40 News Headlines;

Shipping Forecast.

5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast.

RADIO 5 LIVE

(69.3, 90.9MHz MW)

6.00 Breakfast.

9.00 Nicky Campbell.

12.00 The Midday News.

RADIO 5 LIVE

(69.3, 90.9MHz MW)

6.00 Breakfast.

9.00 Nicky Campbell.

12.00 The Early Show with Bill Overton.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

GERMANY HAVE an enviable record in the final stages of major competitions, as England discovered to their cost in the 1996 European Championships and 1990 World Cup Finals. World Cup Legends (6pm Eurosport) celebrates their achievements, and includes footage of an unforgettable match against Holland in the 1974 World Cup Final. Danny DeVito (right) directed and stars in Matilda (5.45pm Sky Premier), an

adaptation of Roald Dahl's story about a young girl sent away to boarding school. DeVito brings a rambunctious energy to the film, which managed to appeal to adults and children alike. Mara Wilson plays the eponymous mini-beroche, and Pam Ferris the fearsome headmistress. More dysfunctional silliness afterwards from The Simpsons (7pm Sky One), in an episode cryptically entitled 'Bart vs Australia'. PETER CONCHIE

The Bill (8696014) 9.30 Bergerac (7226978). 10.30 The Sullivans (8625269). 11.00 Detectives (7373486). 11.55 Neighbours (53204439). 12.30 EastEnders (822817).

1.00 All Creatures Great and Small (8603559). 2.00 The Comedy Alternative: Dead Army (8252323). 2.20 Comeback (8625275). 3.00 Newsday (8625275). 3.30 Merlin (8625275). 4.00 Sports Roundup (8625275). 4.30 The World Today (430-700)/Insight (SW 5975kHz only). 4.45 Off the Shelf - Human Croquet (SW 5875kHz only). 5.30 Outlook (SW 7235kHz only). 5.55 - 6.00 Music Brief (SW 7235kHz only).

TALK RADIO

7.00 Bill Overton and Kirsty Young.

9.00 Scott Chisholm. **11.00**

Lorraine Kelly. **1.00 Anna Raabum.**

3.00 Tommy Boyd. **5.00 Peter Deseley.** **7.00 Nick Abbot.** **9.00**

James Whate. **1.00 Ian Collins.**

5.00 - 7.00 The Early Show with Bill Overton.

RADIO 5 LIVE

(69.3, 90.9MHz MW)

6.00 Breakfast.

9.00 Nicky Campbell.

12.00 The Early Show with Bill Overton.

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(69.3, 90.9MHz MW)

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RADIO 5 LIVE

